







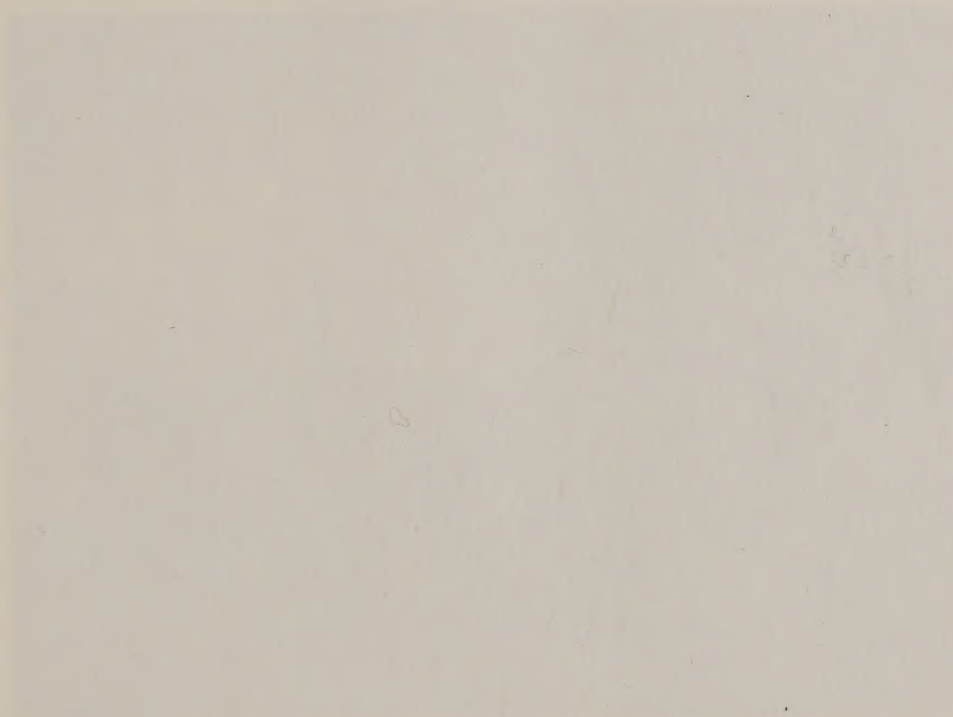
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Fifteen decades of Kingdom  
service, 1810-1960



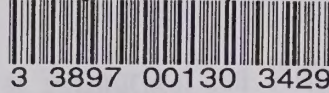




# Fifteen Decades of Kingdom Service

1810-1960

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First Evangelical and Reformed Church

*(United Church of Christ)*

CANTON, OHIO



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# History

of the

First Evangelical and Reformed Church

(United Church of Christ)

Canton, Ohio

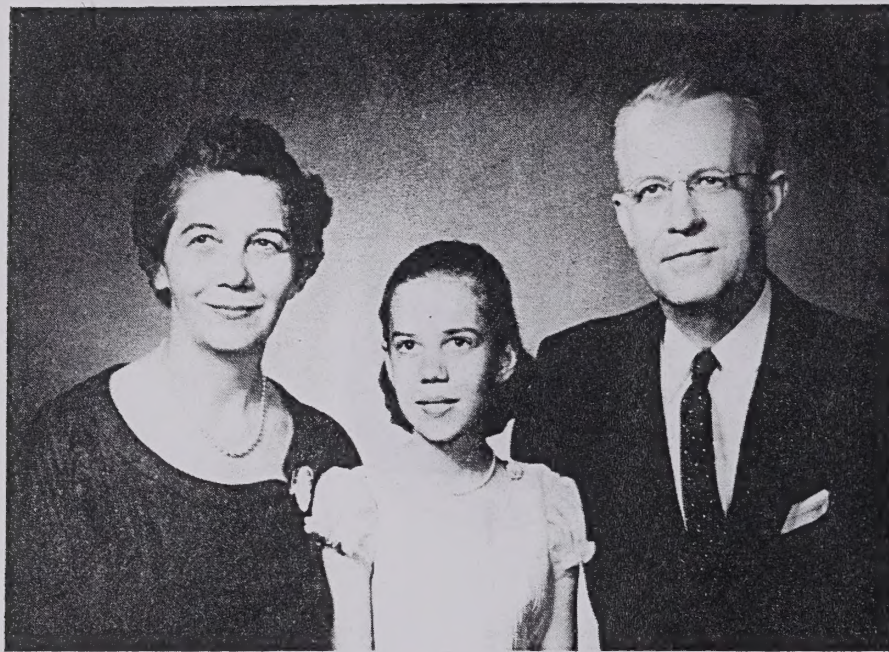




This book is lovingly dedicated to

THE KOEPKE FAMILY

Karl, Velma, Kathleen



In appreciation of untiring love and devotion to

FIRST CHURCH CANTON



## INTRODUCTION

**T**HIS is an historical sketch of one congregation of people who through one hundred and fifty years has been banded together in service and bound in worship to the Lord of the Church — Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Savior of men.

These pages tell the story of her successes and also some failures. Where there have been successes, "Soli Deo Gloria"— to God alone be glory; where there have been failures, may the same God be gracious in forgiveness. This is a story, in part, of human endeavor to add to the splendor of God and the glory of the Church.

As this story is being read, two important facts need to be remembered. First, there is the sense in which the Church comes out of history into our lives. This she does through doctrines, teachings, sacraments, traditions and buildings and outward organization. In another sense the Church comes into being through our spiritual experiences. If the Church is to have meaning and significance for us, she must in some definite manner or means, be the shadow of our spirits also. Our fathers have built, and we have added to their labors, building with stone and wood and metal, and with hands of flesh. But the reality of the Church — if we have built not only for time but for eternity — existed first in their and our hearts. If then, through these years, we have built and made this Church a thing of beauty, of holiness and of truth, it is because we have first experienced these things in our hearts. But having said this, we hasten to say that it is our prayer that we have not so much made the Church as it will have made us.

Further, the reading of these pages must make the reader aware of both the "culmination and continuation" of the revelation of Jesus Christ. It is also eloquently true of First Church that "the fathers had much to give their sons, and their sons made great use of what their fathers had bequeathed to them."

The nature of the Church has not changed in these one hundred and fifty years. But the techniques, the avenues of service and the forms of expression and activity have kept abreast of the changing times. We are sure that this congregation has "presented a changeless Christ to a changing world." Always has she sought to re-illumine the common day

by her meditative return to the light which was never seen on land or sea — the light in the face of Jesus Christ.

It is our hope and prayer that every reader of these pages will have a deeper appreciation, keener understanding, and a warmer love for the Church as it has found expression and life in the activities and worship services of this congregation.

We think the lines of John Davidson here are apropos:

Love built this shrine; these hallowed walls uprose  
To give seclusion from the hurrying throng,  
From tumult of the street, complaint and wrong,  
From rivalry and strife, from taunt of foes —  
If foes thou hast. On silent feet come in,  
Bow low in penitence. Who'er thou art  
Thou, too, hast sinned. Uplift in prayer thy heart.  
Thy Father's blessing waiteth. Read within  
This holy place, in pictured light portrayed,  
The character of worthies who, from years  
Long past, still speak the message here displayed  
In universal language not to fade.  
Leave then thy burden, all thy cares and fears;  
Faith, hope, and love are thine, for thou hast prayed.

The History Committee

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Charles J. Blair

Mrs. Harry E. Bruey

Herbert Deibel

Miss Anna Enzmann

Mrs. Samuel Loliger

Mrs. Chester A. Lyle

Dr. Karl Koepke, *Ex-officio*



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L. Mager, Schriftf.

Peter Lynen, Schriftf.

John B. Rust

F. Straßmann

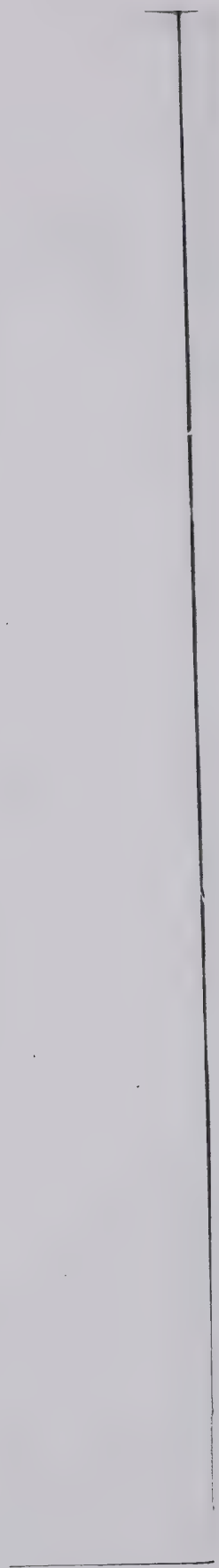
F. C. Nau

Theodor Bolliger

A. R. R. R.

Karl Koefke

Signatures of all Pastors





## THE EARLIEST DAYS

THE history of the First Reformed Church and of the city of Canton is closely interwoven. Both passed together through the hard, poverty-filled pioneer days; both entered together into a long period of slow growth and difficult problems; and both attained to the goal of prosperity and large influence.

It is difficult for the present generation, surrounded by comforts, conveniences, and opportunities constantly multiplying, to imagine the hardships and struggles of the early days. At the beginning of the 1800's, deep, dark forests stretched in almost unbroken continuity where now are found the fertile fields, rich orchards and smiling gardens of Stark County. The Indian war-whoop still frequently resounded in the forests. About 1805, the white man came.

In 1805, Bezaleel Wells secured a tract of land about five miles square which included the present location of Canton. After three years, the number of inhabitants in Canton was only twenty-seven.

Amid primitive conditions, the First Reformed Church of Canton had its origin. The early settlers for the greater part were Germans. These were nearly all Reformed or Lutheran. Rev. John Staugh, a Lutheran minister, visited the new settlement and conducted a service as early as 1806. About the same time, John Peter Mahnenschmidt, who was serving several Reformed congregations in Washington County, Pennsylvania, also visited the people. At long intervals, he would return and conduct services. Rev. Mahnenschmidt's connection with the First Reformed Church of Canton dates from 1806 or 1807 and lasted until 1818 when Rev. Benjamin Faust became the resident pastor of the Canton charge.

## CANTON'S FIRST CHURCH EDIFICE

THE occasional visits of Reverends Staugh and Mahnenschmidt inspired the people with the thought of building a modest little church

which would serve as the home for the Reformed and Lutheran congregations, which were in the process of formation. The denominational barriers during that period were almost obliterated. The beloved German tongue made for a strong union. They quickly came to a satisfactory understanding, took possession about 1810 of the lots which had been dedicated for church purposes by Bezaleel Wells, located be-



First Church Edifice



tween Tuscarawas Street and Second Street S. W., and Wells and McKinley Avenue, 200x200 feet, and at once began preparations to erect a little church. The people were all poor, timber was plentiful, their arms strong and the folks donated their labor. This modest house of worship served the two congregations as a church-home for about thirteen years.

Rev. Mahnenschmidt reports of his work in Canton that he preached to a very large number of persons in the town-hall. They pressed him very earnestly to preach for them regularly, urging that there were many young persons who ought to be instructed and confirmed. He arranged with a Lutheran minister to instruct these young people in the Heidelberg Catechism and prepare them for confirmation. Rev. Mahnenschmidt completed their course of instruction and found about fifty catechumens whom he confirmed and administered to them the Holy Communion. Later, he confirmed thirty-odd more in the same place.

When Rev. Benjamin Faust came as the first resident pastor, Rev. Mahnenschmidt was afforded time for literary work. His chief literary production was an edition and arrangement of the Heidelberg Catechism in German which was published in Canton in 1834 by Peter Kaufmann, and was extensively used by the Reformed congregations in this section of Ohio. Upon Rev. Mahnenschmidt's death, the notice of his departure said of him, "The Rev. John Peter Mahnenschmidt has gone to his blessed reward... He was very successful in winning souls to Christ. He died as he lived, firm in the faith, and with an assurance of a glorious immortality."

During the period that Rev. Mahnenschmidt was serving the Canton Church the little village increased in population until in 1817 there were more than 500 inhabitants.

#### THE FIRST RESIDENT MINISTER

It was a day of rejoicing in the history of the struggling Reformed congregations in Canton and vicinity when the message was received that Rev. Benjamin Faust would accept their call and become the first resident pastor. When the lad was only nine years old, the family moved to Ohio from Pennsylvania. Educational facilities were very few, but young Benjamin managed to secure the first elements of an education. Very early, he expressed a desire to give himself to the work of the ministry. His theological studies were directed by Rev. Mahnenschmidt and Rev. John Staugh, the Lutheran minister. In 1818 he was licensed to preach by the Synod of the Reformed Church, and the following year was ordained to the work of the holy ministry. His parish extended all over Stark County and beyond. Rev. Faust was a preacher of eloquence and power, his delivery was characterized by intense earnestness and vehement gestures. Where no churches had yet been erected, he worshipped with his people in schoolhouses, private homes, and barns. Many a communion service was conducted in a barn. He served from 1818-1832. The congre-



gation grew. In one year alone, he baptized 191 children, and confirmed 100 young people. After sixteen years he was literally worn out and died suddenly at the age of 34, of pulmonary consumption with which he had been afflicted for several years. He left a disconsolate widow and four small children.

The principal event of Rev. Faust's pastorate was the relocation of the church in 1823. A new site was bought half a mile east of the former church, and the second union building was erected. It was a brick building, almost square with a wide gallery running around three sides. The high pulpit reached by a narrow, winding stair, was covered with a blue canopy and a huge yellow star. All the furnishings were very primitive. Here the two congregations worshipped together until 1862. The union was very close. The members of each congregation had the right to vote for the pastors and church officers of the other congregation, as well as their own. This arrangement caused no friction for a generation. The church cemetery surrounded the church and was used as late as 1874.

At the time of Rev. Faust's death, the entire charge numbered ten congregations, ten Sunday Schools, and 600 members. Of this number the Canton membership alone was 140. The services were conducted in German, though in some of the congregations a little English had to be introduced as early as 1826.

Rev. Faust should be held in grateful remembrance by the present generation of members of the First Church. He performed hard, exacting pioneer work with great zeal, for a period of 13 years. His friend and neighbor, Rev. J. W. Hamm, sums up his life and activities in the words: "He was a good man, earnest, zealous, and faithful to his trust, and beloved by all who knew him. He stood high both as a Christian and as a minister of the Gospel."



Second Church Edifice — 1824

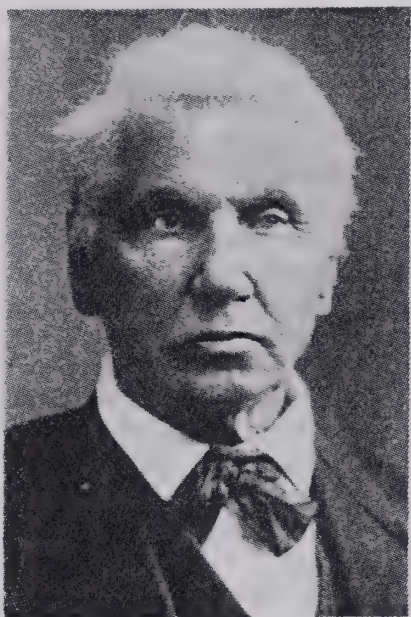




## THE PASTORATE OF REV. PETER HERBRUCK, D. D.

ON August 16, 1831, Peter Herbruck, who was to serve the church for more than fifty years as its pastor and to play a vital part in Canton's religious life, landed in Philadelphia after a four month voyage from Germany across the ocean. The next day he started into the wilderness afoot and penniless. Stopping in Berks County, Pa., he taught school during the winter, earned \$40 and then headed west again, falling in with a covered

wagon train which brought him to Ohio. At Lisbon he turned aimlessly to a road branching off to the right. He reached the village of Canton where he was to spend the remainder of his life.



Peter Herbruck — 1832-1885

About half a year before Reverend Faust's death, he met young Peter Herbruck, who was then less than nineteen years old. He found that Peter had received a good education in the homeland and had always harbored the desire to become a minister. Rev. Faust urged him to decide for the ministry and offered to supervise his studies. The offer was gladly accepted; he became an inmate of the Faust home, and assisted his benefactor who was fast failing in health, in the performance of his pastoral work. After the Rev.

Faust's death, the congregations of the parish invited him to conduct the services and instruct the youth until a pastor could be secured. For the special ministerial acts such as administering the sacraments and confirming the young people, it was necessary to bring in an ordained preacher from another charge. The search for a pastor on whom all could unite was unsuccessful; and during the vacancy, young Herbruck by his discreet conduct and faithful work, so won the majority of the congregations, that by the time he was of age and was ordained, he was elected by a number of congregations.

The young minister tells of his experiences the first two years: "I made nearly all my trips on foot because I was too poor to buy a horse. Neither did I possess an overcoat or mantle. During the winter I walked eight, ten, fifteen and even twenty-four miles on foot through deep snows. Often I slept under so-called clapboard roofs and in the morning could easily write my name in the snow on my bed covers."

It was in the spring of 1833 that Peter Herbruck requested the synod to license him to preach as pastor of the Canton church, but the application was rejected on the ground of his youth. In the fall of the

same year, however, the license was granted, and he became the ordained pastor, serving until his resignation in 1886.

In 1838, Rev. Herbruck actively cooperated in establishing the first Theological Seminary in Canton. He installed the first and only professor, Rev. J. G. Buettner, Ph.D., in the Canton church. But, the professor was too learned and the requirements too high; and so the students who preferred easy courses and short cuts soon left him and in two years the seminary was defunct.

About the same time (1837) a part of the Canton congregation wanted some English preaching. Since the pastor could not preach in English, a group of members from the Reformed congregation united with a similar group from the Lutheran Church, and organized a new English church, known at present as the Trinity Lutheran Church. As the years went on, the need of English preaching became more and more imperative. As Rev. Herbruck steadily refused to introduce any English, hundreds of members were lost to the Reformed Church.

During the two decades from 1830-50 a great wave of temperance reform swept the land. The Ohio Synod took an advanced position in the matter, advising all members and ministers to become total abstainers. This aroused a furore in the parish. The pastor also was opposed to any church legislation on the question. The result was a further withdrawal of many members.

The most strenuous storm, however, was aroused during the years 1840-50 by the new-measure movement. This consisted in the holding of series of methodistic, whoop-em-up revival meetings which soon developed noisy, disorderly, and objectionable features. Many of the English Reformed ministers were quite swept away by the movement. Some of them discarded the Catechism, discontinued religious instructions, and attacked those disagreeing with them. The Canton charge became a battle-ground. Groups of new-measure men invaded the congregation, attacked the pastor in prayer and sermon, and strove to drive him from the field. Hand to hand conflicts were not unknown. Some of the members who were carried away by the movement publicly exulted: "Now we have the pure Gospel. Now we are converted, enlightened, regenerated, sanctified, and saved. Our pastor was never converted. We are praying constantly that he may be converted and receive the Holy Ghost." The movement certainly aroused the congregations; but also stirred up animosities and rancor which were not allayed for many years. Rev. Herbruck throughout this period continued to hold to the honored customs and teachings of the Reformed Church.

Because the Ohio Synod hesitated to protect its German ministers against these unwarranted attacks of the new-measure men, about a score of them who preferred to walk in the familiar and conservative old Reformed paths, took the serious step of separating from the Ohio Synod. Under the leadership of Rev. Herbruck, an independent synod was organized. It existed for six years (1846-1852), and had altogether twenty-five ministers upon its roll, who were serving about eighty congregations.



When the cause of dissatisfaction had been removed the "Herbruck Synod" returned to its allegiance to the Ohio Synod in 1852.

The two congregations which worshipped in the union church at Canton, had grown to such an extent that the old building could no longer hold them; hence, in 1858 the Reformed congregation determined to erect its own building upon the western half of the plot of ground owned by the two congregations. A special act of legislature was necessary to legalize the separation.

Rev. Herbruck started off the building fund with a subscription of \$150, his full year's salary, and by going from house to house and farm to farm he soon had pledges totaling \$4,000. Considerable help came from Catholics in the city because of the close personal friendship between Rev. Herbruck and Rev. Fr. John Baptist Uhlman, pastor of St. Peter's Church. This led to an incident which occupies a high place in the dramatic history of the church. Mr. Herbruck, then a robust man of 45, was accosted on the street by Andrew Meyer, owner of a large tract of timber near Meyers Lake and a Catholic. Mr. Meyer told him he would furnish all the timber for the new church if the pastor would cut down the first tree to be designated by the donor. Such a liberal offer was accepted immediately and a few days later Mr. Herbruck presented himself at the Meyer home, accompanied by three members of the building committee and a group of spectators. Mr. Meyer handed him an ax and led him to an oak tree three feet in diameter. The preacher laid aside his coat and

began chopping away. After about three hours, the tree fell, but the blood was running from his hands. Mr. Meyer kept his part of the bargain faithfully and the tree which the pastor chopped down became the center timber in the steeple of the new church. When the foundations were almost completed, the Lutherans brought suit and delayed further work for two years. Finally in 1861, a division was agreed upon, the corner stone was laid June 23, 1861, and in about one year the new church was completed. The dedication of this, the third building in which the congregation worshipped, took place October 5, 1862.



Church Edifice Built In 1862

A great multitude of people assembled. The five congregations still served by Rev. Herbruck sent large delegations. The new house of God could not contain them all. In the church at least eight hundred persons had assembled. Rev. Robert Kohler, pastor of the Reformed Church in Akron preached at the German service in the morning on the subject, "The Great Significance of the House of God." The text was taken from Genesis 28:17, "How dreadful is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." After

the sermon, the building was dedicated by the pastor to the service of the Triune God. In the afternoon an English service was held. Rev. Buckingham of the Presbyterian Church, Canton, preached. By a peculiar coincidence he had selected the same text that had been used by Rev. Kohler in the morning. In the evening Rev. David Kaemmerer, pastor of the Reformed Church at Wooster, preached on the text, Psalm 26:8, "Jehovah, I love the habitation of thy house, and the place where thy glory dwelleth."

The Canton congregation had now grown to such a membership that the people demanded one service each Sunday. This necessitated the giving up of several of the country congregations belonging to the charge, leaving only Canton, Osnaburg, Paris, and Cairo congregations to be served by Rev. Herbruck. The Pastor's salary was increased to \$750 a year without parsonage.

The demand for some English preaching had become irresistible in the course of the years; and hence, as Rev. Herbruck was determined to keep the First Church entirely German, he finally advocated the organizing of a second Reformed Church which should be all English. In 1871, therefore, Trinity Reformed Church was organized and the congregation worshiped during the first year in the mother church.

Soon after the dedication of the new church in 1862, a parochial schoolhouse was also erected, and a school maintained for many years.

The cemetery that occupied most of the church plot except where the church stood was gradually abandoned. After the West Lawn Cemetery was opened many of the bodies were removed from the church's burying ground; but occasional interments took place until 1874 when the congregation voted to forbid further burials.

In 1872, Rev. Herbruck dropped the last of the congregations outside of Canton, and for the remainder of his active ministry gave his whole time to the Canton church. The membership of the church at this time was 494 and 200 enrolled in the Sunday School.

In 1875 Heidelberg College recognized the long and influential career of Rev. Herbruck by granting to him the honorary title of Doctor of Divinity.

The great event of Rev. Herbruck's last years was his golden jubilee, celebrated in 1881. In honor of the occasion the Ladies' Aid Society presented the pastor's wife with a silver tea set, and the congregation gave the pastor a gold medal. Rev. Peter Herbruck continued his labors until January 1886, after which he lived in quiet retirement. During the closing years of his life, Rev. Herbruck was very feeble. He died September 22, 1895. The Canton Repository closed its account of the funeral services with the appropriate and sympathetic words, "As a preacher he had few equals, as a pastor he was beloved, and as a father he was kind and reserved." During the fifty-three years, he baptized 5,938, confirmed 2,717, married 2,611 couples, and conducted 2,560 funerals. It is believed that his was the longest continuous pastorate in the history of Ohio.



## THE PASTORATE OF REV. JOHN B. RUST, Ph.D.

REV. J. B. RUST was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, September 5, 1856. His father, Rev. Herman Rust, was pastor of the First Reformed Church of Cincinnati for twelve years. Later he was called to the "German Professorship" in Heidelberg Theological Seminary, and the "Professorship of the German Language and Literature" in Heidelberg College, Tiffin, Ohio. Young Rust attended the public schools in Cincinnati and



Rev. John B. Rust, Ph.D. — 1886-1889

Tiffin, and then took the full classical course in the college and seminary, graduating in the spring of 1879. During the following winter he began his work as pastor of the Waynesburg charge, twelve miles south of Canton. He received a call from the First Reformed Church, Canton, and was installed on January 19, 1886.

Four achievements of Rev. Rust's pastorate are especially noteworthy. *First*—English was introduced. Scores of members had been lost during the years because the congregation had no English. Rev. Rust made a condition of accepting the call that English evening services should be introduced at once. The consistory unanimously endorsed the plan, and to the entire satisfaction of the membership the new order

was installed. *Secondly*—A church roll, containing the names of those claiming to be members, together with their addresses, was compiled. Before this the pastor had kept the roll chiefly "in his head." *Thirdly*—An advanced position on the temperance question was taken by the pastor. This aroused a great storm of angry opposition; but he undauntedly maintained his principles and presented the truth on the basis of the Holy Scripture. This "silenced the objectors, converted blind and angry opposition into sense and reason, and ushered in the dawn of a better era." *Fourth*—An improvement was made in the church edifice by the erection of a suitable extension at the rear of the auditorium for the pipe-organ, and to accommodate the choir back of the pulpit platform, which was enlarged and built further out into the body of the church to overcome an unfortunate and troublesome echo. An organ-tuner from Pittsburgh had charge of the work of removing the organ from the choir-loft to the new place provided for it. The improvement cost the congregation somewhat over three thousand dollars.

The temporary impairment of his health, which made it impossible for him to attend properly to the duties of so large a congregation, number-

ing 750 communicants at that time, and about 400 pupils and teachers in the Sunday School, led the pastor, Rev. J. B. Rust, to hand in his resignation on July 14, 1889, with heartfelt regret. Later he served as pastor of the Reformed Church in New Philadelphia and Robertsville. He moved to Tiffin in 1899 from where he served the Bascom charge in Seneca County for nine years. Dr. Rust has also been a writer on historical and theological subjects and delivered series of lectures at Heidelberg College.

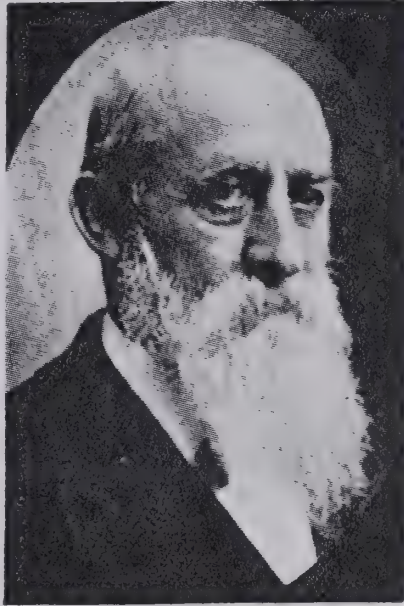
As pastor of the Canton congregation, Rev. Rust was confronted by a series of difficult and ugly questions and problems which were handled with peculiar ability and fearlessness. His name is held in grateful remembrance by many of our older members.

Reverend Rust died at Tiffin, Ohio, at the age of 82 on September 8, 1938.



## THE PASTORATE OF REV. FREDERICK STRASSNER, D.D.

REV. FREDERICK STRASSNER was born on February 22, 1831 in the city of Bremen in Germany, of pious Reformed ancestry. He was the thirteenth child in a family of fifteen. In 1848 he started for America in a sailing vessel, as all the friends and relatives agreed that this was much safer than taking a steamship, because only so could he avoid the danger of fire on the ocean. It took 60 days to make the trip to



Frederick Strassner, D.D. — 1890-96

New Orleans. He spent these days in studying the new language, English. After landing at New Orleans a further journey of six days up the Mississippi was required to reach St. Louis, where his sister lived. From St. Louis, young Strassner went to Cincinnati and there, to his great joy, found a little Reformed mission whose pastor was Rev. Herman Rust, (father of our Rev. Rust) who influenced young Strassner to give himself to the work of the ministry. Later he was overcome by the Holy Spirit and was convinced that he must enter the ministry.

Largely by his own efforts he worked his way through Franklin and Marshall College at Lancaster, Pa., and then entered the theological seminary at Mercersburg, Pa. His work as minister was performed at Wilkes-Barre, Pa. five years and in Ohio at Berwick, three years; Lancaster, two years; Union charge near Lancaster, three years; Orrville, eighteen years; Canton First Church, six years; Canton, Grace Church, ten years.

Rev. Frederick Strassner, D.D. became pastor of our congregation on January 1, 1890. He was then a man ripe in experience who could look back on thirty years of successful pastoral activity. Under his leadership, the congregation made a number of decided advances. The first work undertaken was the building of a parsonage on the east side of the church. The entire cost of the building including leveling off the ground, walks, sewer, etc. was \$2002.

The second important work was the revising of the roll of members. When the first roll had been compiled by Rev. Rust, many had claimed membership who were not entitled to it; hence, the chaff had to be sifted from the wheat. The nominal membership of 743 was thus reduced to 436.

Third—One of the finest accomplishments of the pastorate was the founding of a Christian Endeavor Society on June 1, 1890. This was one of the earliest societies in the Reformed Church in Ohio. It gave invaluable training to a host of the young people of the church, and has aided in developing some of the most active workers the congregation has had. In 1894, a Junior Society was also organized and gathered in about sixty of the Juniors. The organization of these societies so long ago by Rev. Strassner speaks very highly for his spiritual vision and understanding of the needs of the young people under his pastoral care.

The Reformed Church Hymnal was introduced in 1893 and was ordered to be used in all the worship of the congregation. Also, the work of the consistory was made more effective by the organization of committees to which were entrusted specific phases of congregational activities. The grace of giving was also so effectively presented that the benevolent gifts were largely increased.

The pastorate ended May 1, 1896. The Sunday School had grown from 300 to 480, and 200 members were added to the congregation.

After the close of his labors with the First Church, Dr. Strassner founded the Grace Reformed Church, then located on Market Avenue South and 13th St. S. E. After preaching more than half a century, he retired from the active ministry in 1906 and spent his last years with his children. The Lord called his faithful servant home on June 24, 1911.



## THE PASTORATE OF REV. FREDERICK C. NAU

REV. FREDERICK C. NAU was born in Columbus, Ohio, December 2, 1871, where his father was principal of the German High School. His education was begun under the guidance of his father, and continued in the public schools at Mt. Eaton, Galion and New Bavaria. He was the oldest son and was hostler, woodchopper and manager of about two acres of muck land. His chief ambition was to excell as a corn-cutter and husker.



Rev. Frederick C. Nau — 1896-1907

He could earn one dollar per day and board for threshing, binding wheat, carrying sheaves, cutting or husking corn. He walked one and one-half miles to country school each morning. He was a very energetic young man.

One Saturday evening, August 1887, his father and mother announced to him that they had decreed that he should go to Calvin College, located in Cleveland, Ohio. He and Rev. Theodore P. Bolliger were classmates, graduating together in 1893. They maintained a close friendship through the years. During his college career, Rev. Nau gave evidence of possessing exceptional intellectual abilities, and excelled especially as a speaker and debater. In the fall of 1893, he entered the Heidelberg Theological Seminary at Tiffin, Ohio and graduated in May 1896.

Just a few weeks after graduation, Rev. Nau was invited to supply the pulpit at First Reformed Church, Canton for several Sundays. His services were so acceptable that he received a unanimous call, and began his pastorate on July 30, 1896. This new pastorate began most auspiciously. The people were united and manifested a will to work. Eleven fruitful years of activity followed.

One of the first problems of the pastorate was the securing of more room for the growing congregation and Sunday School. The consistory was authorized by the congregation to begin the raising of a building fund. To enable the church to borrow needed moneys to carry forward the building operations, action was taken to have the church legally incorporated. This was done, June 30, 1897, and the old name "Jerusalem's German Reformed Church" was changed to "The First German Reformed Church of Canton, Ohio." (Constitution—157).

On the 17th of April 1898, the congregation voted to build a large addition to the west side of the church. The new building was completed

and dedicated in January, 1899. The cost of the new building with the new front which was added, amounted to about \$18,000. The entire cost of the new building alone was about \$12,000; the remainder was expended for extensive repairs on the old building, carpeting and frescoing. The basement was fitted up as a social and dining hall. It was not arranged for Sunday School purposes until 1905. The fine memorial windows were placed in the church at this time by the Frauenverein and some of the families of the congregation.

The ground which had been excavated was used to level off and terrace the cemetery back of the church which had been abandoned since 1874. The remaining tombstones were laid over the graves and covered. The old frame school house, which for twenty years under Dr. Peter Herbruck's pastorate, had served the purpose of a German parochial school, was sold for \$100, and removed from the church grounds. Before the erection of the new Sunday School structure, this schoolhouse was used by the Primary Department of the Sunday School, and for the usual social and business meetings of the church.

All these changes proved of benefit to the congregation. The results justified the expenditure of the moneys. The new building was planned chiefly for work. The fifteen classrooms and the entire arrangement, made for more effective teaching and greater efficiency in general. The present large, flourishing Sunday School is due largely to two factors; the modern Sunday School building and equipment, and the selection of William Daberko for superintendent. He possessed marked talents and qualifications for this work, knew how to cooperate with pastor and consistory, how to select competent teachers and work with them, how to organize and inspire the school, and make wise use of the material equipment at hand.

At this time, the number of members of the consistory was increased from twelve to eighteen.

For some time there was a desire prevalent among the younger women of the church for a second woman's organization. The "Frauenverein" was large and flourishing and doing a splendid work, but there were many younger women in the congregation who were not affiliated with this society. This fact prompted the organization of the Woman's Missionary Society in January 1902. This was the first English Woman's Missionary Society of Central Synod.

During 1902 the question of installing the Individual Communion Service came up for consideration. There were arguments pro and con. Many of the devout German members could not conscientiously vote for the new way. It was, therefore, decided to use both services, the old historic service with the common cup, in the morning of Communion Sunday, and the individual cups in the evening. This arrangement gave general satisfaction.



In the year 1906, an agitation began in the congregation for a new and modern pipe organ. The purchase of such an instrument became possible through the generosity of the heirs of Henry A. Rupp, an old and faithful member of the congregation who contributed \$1,000. An additional \$1,500 was given by Andrew Carnegie. These two gifts with the addition of \$600 by the members, and \$500 allowed for the old organ, made it possible to install the handsome and eminently satisfactory instrument still in use.

In the fall of 1904 the Sunday School offered to complete the basement and fit it up for Sunday School purposes, and pay all the expenses. The congregation gladly gave it permission and the work was completed during 1905 at a total expense of \$1,648.

In 1906, the last payment on the debt incurred by the building of the Sunday School addition was made and the church was free at last.

The language question was discussed frequently, frankly and seriously in our congregation for many years. In 1907, by a vote of 270 to 116, taken on a Sunday morning, it was decided to hold English morning services every alternate Sunday. This vote was taken shortly after Rev. Nau had resigned and was preparing to leave for a new field of labor. The Sunday School and evening services were made English during the two preceding pastorates.

During this period of eleven years as pastor of our church, Rev. Nau's report of membership of the congregation indicates that the number increased from 524 to over 1,000. There were 444 baptisms, 405 confirmations, and over 400 accessions by certificate and reprofession of faith. Did they all remain true to their church? Alas, not all! The sad fact remains in our modern churches, that so many of those who unite with the churches do not continue faithful to the end. But it has always been so. It is not easy to keep the faith and conserve the spiritual life.

Having for some time had a desire to go East, and having within a year received two calls from the eastern section of our Church, Rev. Nau decided to accept the call from St. Mark's Church of Easton, Pa. Accordingly, he presented his resignation to our congregation on June 6, 1907.

Subsequently, Reverend Nau served at St. Mark's Reformed Church, Reading, Pa. for seven years, and at Grace Reformed Church, Pittsburgh, Pa. from June 1916 until the time of his death on December 29, 1926. His widow lived at Lima, Ohio, where she died on December 7, 1943.

Wherever Rev. Nau has served, the membership of his congregations very materially increased, and he made for himself an enviable reputation as a clear and forceful speaker with a helpful and inspiring message.

In the First Reformed Church in Canton, a large circle of sincere friends holds his name in grateful remembrance.





## THE PASTORATE OF REV. THEODORE P. BOLLIGER D.D.

**I**N the little village of Newville, Indiana, now known as Vera Cruz, Rev. Theodore P. Bolliger was born on Friday, December 13, 1872. When nearly six years of age, the family moved to Kansas. There his boyhood was spent at Hiawatha and New Basel, where he attended the public schools. He learned to read German as early as he learned the English. New Basel was a community largely composed of Swiss people, with



Rev. T. P. Bolliger, D.D. — 1907-1919

conditions raw and primitive. Everybody was poor and there were no luxuries and few of the necessities of life. His father was a minister and had a salary of \$400 a year, a parsonage, and received all the meat and flour that the household of ten required. The school term lasted only six months of the year, and he had a keen passion to learn and a terrific appetite to read, while there were but few books in English in his father's library; so perforce, he literally learned his schoolbooks by heart. He then turned to father's German books, and took up history, theology, poetry, dramas, and even the doctor-book. Before he was sixteen, he had read and knew intimately more German literary masterpieces than are now taken up in an ordinary college course. The German Bible also

passed into his very life's blood.

During all his boyhood days, he secretly nursed the hope of becoming a minister some day. His father had prayed that he might enter this sacred calling. Neither knew of the other's desire. They had been too reserved towards one another. Father Bolliger quietly told his son one day that he was going to send him to Calvin College at Cleveland, Ohio. In September 1888 he went to Cleveland. By heroic sacrifices and endless self-denials, his father kept him in college for five years. By faithful application, he stood at the head of every class, during every month without a break for five years, graduating in June 1893 as valedictorian. After a year spent in teaching school in Kansas, he entered the Theological Seminary, Lancaster, Pa., taking the full three-year course. He was licensed and ordained in 1897 and in the fall of that year was married to Elizabeth Mohr, a former student at Calvin College. In the course of the years, four children arrived to gladden the parsonage.

In addition to the college and seminary work already mentioned, he pursued special work under the direction of the University of Chicago, in

Old Testament prophecy, and for additional work in sociology, economics, and psychology, received from the Illinois Wesleyan University the degree of Bachelor of Philosophy in 1904, and Master of Arts in 1908. The degree of Doctor of Divinity was bestowed on him at Heidelberg College in 1918.

Rev. Bolliger began his ministry at Wilkes-Barre, Pa., as pastor of the St. Luke's Church where he remained four years and four months. In 1901, he was called to New Philadelphia, Ohio, where he remained six years.

Reverend Bolliger was unanimously elected to serve as pastor of our church and preached his first sermon on Sunday, November 17, 1907. Among the more important events of his pastorate the following may be mentioned:

1. More English preaching was introduced according to the vote of the congregation. For a while this aroused considerable opposition; but all the members remained loyal. The German service remained one of the best attended until the outbreak of the war.

2. The church-roll was revised. The slogan was: "Every member attending, working, praying, giving." Through this process 382 names formerly counted, were dropped. The gap created by these erasures was more than filled. By 1917, there had been 338 additions by confirmation, including the youth of the church and adults, and 274 by reprofession and dismissals from other churches.

3. Old debts amounting to \$3,000 were wiped out under the enthusiastic guidance of Superintendent William Daberko.

4. Many improvements amounting to \$7,000 were made on the church property. The entire church was re-laid with a heavy Brussels carpet, a new roof was put on the Sunday School wing of the building, the entire building was frescoed and redecorated, the woodwork was stained to a dark oak, the pews were refinished in dark oak, and a new lighting system was installed. The exterior of the church was also thoroughly repaired and painted, and a new roof placed on the older portion of the building.

5. Great temperance agitations swept the congregation. Rev. Bolliger always preached total abstinence as the Christian ideal and duty. There were some strenuous experiences; but the issue eventually became settled.

6. The contributions of the church increased steadily. Up to 1917, the lowest amount given during Rev. Bolliger's pastorate annually for congregational purposes was \$3,361; the highest was \$6,348. The lowest benevolent offerings were \$570; the highest, \$1,626. It is evident that the spirit of sacrifice which is the spirit of Christ, had increased very substantially.



7. The First Church also cooperated with the other Reformed Churches in Canton in establishing the Lowell Church, dedicated in 1917. Contributions amounting to more than \$1,200 were freely given, and a considerable number of members was dismissed to the new church.

The organizations of the congregation have been of great help. The Sunday School at this time had 110 years of faithful achievements to its credit. It had an enrollment of about 1,000 and a corps of 65 teachers and officers. Its gifts for benevolent and humanitarian purposes were growing continually. The Ladies Aid Society was the only German organization. It was organized in 1879 and at the time of its greatest prosperity numbered 140.

The Christian Endeavor Society, organized in 1890, had a fine record of church workers which it trained and performed many helpful deeds.

The Woman's Missionary Society, organized in 1903, at this time had a membership of 110. This society was instrumental in bringing about the organization of the St. John's Classical Society, and always held a leading place in both the classical and synodical organization. The Young Woman's Auxiliary Missionary Society composed mainly of business girls was organized in 1916 and had 35 members. The Emma Ziemer Circle was organized the same year for girls of the teen years. It also had an enrollment of 35. There was also a mission band for the younger ones.

Rev. Bolliger gave twelve of the best years of his life to the Canton First Reformed Church. He felt that he had received abundant evidence that the love and affection of the people were his.

On the eleventh anniversary of his pastorate, Rev. Bolliger made the following report:

216 times I have heard the tinkling of the wedding bells, and seen the newly married couple go forth facing the future with shining faces. 253 times have I baptized little children and consecrated them to God and His church. 286 times have I stood beside the open grave and repeated the mournful words: "Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." 650 new members have I received into the church, of whom the greater part have remained faithful and active; but some, alas, have fallen away. The church has become stronger, more liberal, more efficient. To God be all the glory!

In industrial centers such as Canton, all religious work is beset with many difficulties, but our heavenly Father has always granted a sufficient measure of success to faithful effort, to keep courage and go forward.

After twelve years of service, Rev. Bolliger closed his labors in the First Church on September 1, 1919, for the purpose of taking up the work of General Secretary of the Tri-synodic Boards of Home Missions and Church Erection. He and his family moved to Madison, Wisconsin where they resided until his retirement which was delayed by the merger with the Evangelical Synod until August 1, 1943. With his health already

injured by several strokes, Rev. and Mrs. Bolliger moved to Louisville, Ky., to be near their daughter Katherine, and where the climate was more mild. He was called to the Church Triumphant on September 2, 1952. Since the summer of 1957, Mrs. Bolliger has been a resident of the Evangelical and Reformed Church Home for the Aged at Upper Sandusky, Ohio.

Two daughters, Aurelia and Louise, became foreign missionaries. Aurelia taught English at the Miyagi Girls' School at Sendai, Japan. Louise also went to Sendai as a teacher of English and Music. After five months of service, she contracted pneumonia and died at the early age of twenty-four. This tragic experience left its mark on the lives of her mother and father. Louise is buried in Japan.

His son, Theodore, an attorney in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, is following in his father's footsteps. He is a member of the Evangelical and Reformed Board of International Missions. He will serve until 1965 when the Evangelical and Reformed Board and the Board of the Congregational Christian Churches will be merged with a new Constitution and name. He is handling much of the legal work involved.

Before we close the chapter on the life of Reverend Bolliger, we wish to call attention to the complete history of First Reformed Church, written and published by him in the year 1917. This history is a book of 208 pages containing 34 illustrations and constitutes an invaluable record of the congregation's life up to that date. The church is still deeply indebted to this former pastor for this rare and efficient piece of work which was carried out with great ability, with painstaking labor and with great understanding and faithfulness. The book is a veritable treasure for any new pastor in the field and for anyone else who desires to look into the life of the First Reformed Church.

Dr. Bolliger states in his own words: "The writing of this book has been purely a labor of love, undertaken to acquaint our membership with some of the stirring scenes, through which our congregation has passed. Had I correctly estimated, at the beginning, the tremendous difficulties to be surmounted, I could hardly have mustered up courage enough to begin. I was determined not to let the work of the parish suffer on account of these historical investigations, and so robbed myself of many hours of sleep and recreation. But, if the narrative awakens in the heart of the members an interest in their splendid history, a deeper love to their church, and a greater loyalty to the kingdom of God; then, indeed am I richly rewarded."

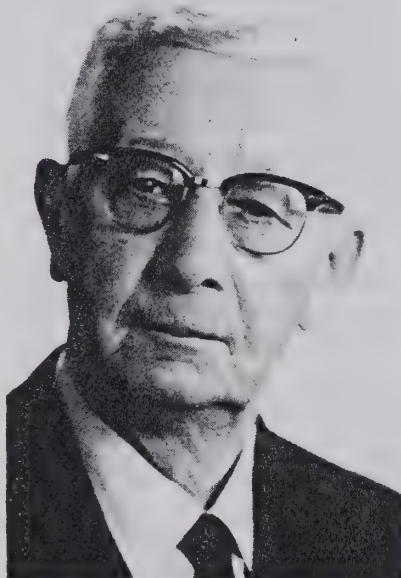
After Dr. Bolliger's retirement, Dr. Charles Schaeffer, Executive Secretary of the Board of Home Missions of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, prepared a six-page appreciation of Dr. Bolliger and his work. We quote one paragraph: "In this recital of his life and work in the ministry, twenty-four years of which were devoted definitely to the cause of Home Missions, the Board of National Missions desires to put on record its sense of high appreciation of a noble character, a great soul and an eminent service well rendered to Christ and His Church."



# THE PASTORATE OF REV. R. W. BLEMKER, D.D.

**R**UDOLF WILLIAM BLEMKER was born on March 30, 1881 on a farm in the heart of the Westphalian plains, near Muenster and Osnabrueck, Germany. Rudolph was the third of five children. One brother still lives in Westphalia. The family home was one of simplicity and frugality. Faithful and useful work was the order of each day. Religion was a molding force, and honesty and integrity ranked above learning, material prosperity, or worldly success.

After eight years of public school, and two years of weekly two-hour periods of religious instruction, he was confirmed at the age of sixteen. He learned the watch-making trade and worked at this occupation for five years before coming to America in 1903 at the age of twenty-two years. He made his home with his brother and family in Indianapolis, Indiana. This brother had come to America thirteen years earlier.



Rev. R. W. Blemker, D.D. — 1920-1946

His contact with the active type of American church life and the personal, kindly interest of Pastor Edward Vornholt of the Immanuel Church, Indianapolis, caused a quickening of religious interest in the youth's mind and heart so that after a year's work, he responded to an appeal to study for the ministry. Some paternal relatives were ministers in Germany and were instrumental in directing his steps into the Christian ministry.

From watchmaker to minister required considerable education. His high school work was completed at Mission House Academy, Sheboygan, Wisconsin. He graduated from Heidelberg College in 1911, and from Central Theological Seminary in 1914. The degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon him by Heidelberg College in 1928. By working at his trade during vacations and at spare time during the school year, and by emergency assistance on the part of his generous brother, he managed not only to meet the financial needs of those years, but also to make a voyage home in 1912 by working his way over on a steamer.

He was ordained to the ministry in 1914 in his first charge, the Zion Reformed Church, New Bremen, Ohio. He brought with him as his bride, Miss Lillian Kohl of the Immanuel Church, Indianapolis. The New Bremen pastorate lasted four years. During this time two daughters, Margaret and Elizabeth, blessed the home. A call from the First Reformed Church of Warren, Ohio, resulted in a two years' pastorate there, after

which the Canton pastorate began on April 1, 1920. The youngest daughter, Martha, was born in our parsonage.

After the close of Rev. Bolliger's pastorate, during a period of seven months, while the consistory was endeavoring to secure a new pastor, the Reverend Harvey S. Stoner regularly supplied the pulpit every Lord's Day. Rev. Stoner did his work to the great satisfaction of the congregation.

It was around Thanksgiving in the year 1919 when the pulpit committee, consisting of the elders, William Feller, Gottfried Snyder and Alfred Raber, appeared one afternoon at the home of Rev. Blemker in Warren, Ohio. They stated their mission as that of interviewing the Warren pastor as to whether, or not, he would be interested in a change of pastorate and, if so, to come to visit the Canton Church in the near future. Rev. Blemker, having been in Warren but two years, felt that it was impossible to accept the invitation. But several weeks after this visit there came a request from Canton to come for some Sunday to conduct a German Communion Service. This request was granted and the date set for Sunday, January 25. In addition to the morning German Communion Service, Rev. Blemker also conducted an evening preaching service in English. In a few weeks, a letter came from the Pulpit Committee, asking Rev. Blemker whether he would consent to become a candidate. This consent was given, an election was held, with the result that the Blemkers came to occupy the parsonage on the first day of April, 1920.

The next day was Good Friday. That evening the new pastor faced a completely filled house for the Communion Service. Thirty-four adult members were ready to be received into the church as the fruit of the members' work under the inspiration of Rev. Stoner's evangelistic preaching during the winter months. This made a deep impression on the new pastor's mind in a two-fold way. He felt the responsibility and difficulty of being the pastor of so large a congregation. He also had a sense of the challenge of the possibility with so great a working force.

The active membership at this time was 980. From the very beginning of Rev. Blemker's pastorate, the congregation showed eagerness for work and further development. The congregation was very cooperative and never failed to respond to any good cause the pastor presented. There was a disposition to make changes where necessary and to hold on to the old which had proved good and helpful.

#### **THE UNIFIED MORNING SERVICE**

During the summer of 1920 was inaugurated what has become known as the combined or unified morning service—that is combining and unifying the Sunday School and Church Service into one continuous service from nine to eleven o'clock. This change at least doubled the church attendance, and, from the beginning had the hearty support of the Church and Sunday School leadership as well as of the congregation



as a whole. This method was later adopted by many churches in Canton and elsewhere.

At first, this could be done only every other Sunday when the Church Service was in the English language. Through the following years the German constituency declined naturally. This situation was met by holding an English Worship Service every Sunday and a German Service on the first Sunday of each month at 10:30 A. M. having been preceded by an English Worship Service at 9 o'clock followed by the Sunday School from 9:45 to 10:30. The German Church Service was discontinued entirely during World War II. However, the Holy Communion was administered on Good Friday in a German Service until 1947. Thus the language problem solved itself without any unpleasantness.

#### THE PARISH PAPER

During the summer of 1920 there was inaugurated another feature in the congregation's program, namely, THE HELPER. From 1920 to 1927 it was a monthly publication and was given out at the church to as many as were present to take a copy home. In 1927 it was changed to a weekly publication. Second rate mailing privileges were secured and it was mailed to about eight hundred homes every Friday at a weekly mailing cost of about sixty cents. For forty years now, THE HELPER has been a welcome weekly visitor in our homes. Our members look forward to its receipt with great anticipation. It has made itself almost indispensable in the life and work of the church. Our pastor is the editor.

#### FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The financial phase of a congregation's life is often fraught with pain and difficulty. This has not been true in First Reformed Church. When Rev. Blemker came in the spring of 1920, the Forward Movement in the Reformed Church was nearing its climax. Due to the lack of a regular pastor, no definite work had been done. This became the first task of the new pastor. The consistory and the membership rallied to the cause in a remarkable way. The quota was set at \$32,000.00. Twenty-eight thousand was pledged to be paid over a period of five years, and \$27,131.32 was actually paid. This was far above the average of the denomination as a whole.

In the fall of 1920, the consistory decided to use what is known as the duplex envelope system for weekly contributions by each member for both the current expenses of the congregation and the missionary and benevolent work of the denomination. This was launched by an every member canvass, and the results were overwhelming—especially with regard to the congregation's benevolent contributions. During the first few years, while the Forward Movement pledges were being paid, the annual benevolent giving reached as many thousands of dollars as formerly hundreds of dollars. The records show that for the first five years, the average benevolent giving was over eleven thousand dollars. After the Forward Movement period, it remained annually between seven thousand

and eight thousand dollars. During the terrible industrial depression, the benevolent giving still remained over five thousand dollars per year. This included the giving of the Sunday School, the missionary and other organizations. For a long number of years, the Sunday School maintained a native Evangelist in Yochow, China, the Reverend M. C. Tang. The cost was \$400 annually. It was raised by birthday offerings and by one class giving a missionary offering each Sunday.

#### **EMPLOYMENT OF CHURCH SECRETARY**

The additional clerical work entailed by the new financial system necessitated the employment of a church secretary. This also gave the pastor much needed help in his work. Every organization of the church has been helped greatly by the work that is done by the church office. For a time, religious education and young people's work was done by the church secretary. The position was first held by the late Miss Zelma Wolf, who served for eight years; Ruth Christman for two years; Lydia Witschi Loliger, six years; Emma Pretorius, seven years; Pauline Regula, three years; Helen Worthman, three years; and at present Lucile Huckels is serving faithfully and efficiently as our office secretary since 1951.

#### **AN HISTORIC EVENT**

In the autumn of 1923, First Reformed Church had a part in the making of Reformed Church history in Ohio. This was the time of the merging of the Central Synod (which had been the German Synod) and the old Ohio Synod into the new Ohio Synod. The first meeting was held in First Reformed Church. The actual merger ceremonies took place in Trinity Church. The following days, the Synod meetings were held in Trinity, and the meetings of the Women's Missionary Society of Ohio Synod in First Reformed Church.

This important event gave the incentive for redecorating the church at considerable cost. The Gethsemane picture was secured at that time and Mr. and Mrs. Fred Smith made it a gift to the church to honor the memory of their parents.

#### **BUILDING NEW PARISH HOUSE**

It was the Forward Movement with its heavy pledges that caused the postponement of a much needed building program. The Sunday School was growing steadily. No adequate departmental work could be done with the Juniors and Intermediates. The Beginners and Primaries were the only departments having separate rooms. All the older children and young people had to meet with the adult group. The old basement also became entirely inadequate for social meetings and other activities. To relieve the situation immediately, a room was added to the rear of the church to house the cradle roll group and the church office. This is the room now known as The Chapel. The cost was fifteen hundred dollars.

As soon as the Forward Movement pledges had been paid the need for more and better room became so pressing that the congregation launch-

ed definitely into the project of building a large new building. This building, the Parish House, was the outstanding material accomplishment of the congregation during the 1920's and 1930's.

Let us quote a paragraph from the souvenir program used at the time of the dedication, June 12, 1927:

"Early in 1926 the consistory yielded to the pressure of the congregation to proceed with the erection of a new building for Sunday School and other educational as well as recreational and social purposes. An architect was engaged, plans and estimates of cost were submitted. A special congregational meeting authorized the consistory to proceed with plans to raise the required amount of money and to erect the proposed building. Immediately work began in earnest by both the Finance committee and the Building committee. The Finance committee has been busy throughout the past year with the result that up to date the cost of the building has practically all been met by cash or pledges.

"A ground breaking service was held on Sunday, August 1. The corner stone was laid with an impressive service on Sunday, September 12. It took practically ten months from ground breaking to completing the building. Thus we have come to this day of dedication with every reason to rejoice and to be happy in what has been accomplished under the manifest blessings of our heavenly Father."

Mr. William Feller was chairman of the Finance committee and Mr. N. O. Hexamer, chairman of the Building committee. The architect was Charles E. Firestone, and the general contractor, E. H. Walker, both of Canton.

The total cost of the Parish House, including equipment was approximately eighty-five thousand dollars. This sum was raised by the congregation in cash and pledges. There were gifts great and small, but above all, there was harmony, good will and loyalty throughout this enterprise. The largest gift was \$10,000. There were many large gifts, and a multitude of smaller gifts, nearly all of the members having some part. Indeed, the entire congregation had a mind to work and to give. Much of the interior equipment was donated.

The time for the erection of the Parish House appears to have been most propitious. By the time the industrial depression descended upon our country in 1929, most of the pledges had been paid. There remained a debt of only \$6,000 at that time. During the depression years, the interest on this amount was paid and small amounts on the principal. The mortgage on the Parish House building was burned on June 13, 1937, exactly ten years after dedication.

It would be hard to imagine our church program going forward without the use of our Parish House. It is used by the little ones, by the



young people, and the adults. It makes First Reformed one of the best equipped churches in Canton, and one of the best equipped Reformed churches in Ohio.

#### **PASTOR SENT ON TRIP TO EUROPE AND THE HOLY LAND**

In the spring of 1925, when the pastor had completed five years of service, it was proposed to the congregation that the pastor be given a three months' vacation, and that he be given a purse to enable him to visit his mother and the rest of his folks in Germany. The congregation's response was generous and hearty. In fact, the purse was so generous that the pastor could take with him on the trip, Mrs. Blemker and the youngest daughter, Martha, then four years old; and it was also possible for the pastor to add a trip to the Holy Land. All this was noble and fine on the part of the congregation.

During these three months in 1925, the Rev. Willis Mathias, who had just completed his theological studies, was secured for supply pastor. While here, he was ordained and installed as assistant pastor.

#### **CONGREGATION CELEBRATES SUPERINTENDENT'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY**

Coincident with the dedication of the Parish House in June, 1927, the 25th Anniversary of Mr. William Daberko's superintendency of our Sunday School, was observed. This was done with enthusiasm by a grateful and appreciative congregation. He was given a purse which helped toward financing a trip to Europe in the summer of 1928.

Mr. Daberko continued as superintendent three years longer. In 1930, he insisted that he be allowed to relinquish the superintendency and that the responsibility be placed on younger shoulders. He was elected superintendent emeritus and Mr. Paul G. Schneider, was elected to succeed Mr. Daberko.

#### **RENOVATION OF CHURCH INTERIOR**

A most surprising bequest came in January 1931 when the death of Charles L. Paar of Scranton, Pennsylvania occurred. In his will, Mr. Paar had provided a bequest to the First Reformed Church of Canton in the sum of \$5,000 to be used in establishing a memorial in the name of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Paar. This bequest was used in the summer of 1932 for extensive renovation of the interior of the church. This included a new pulpit platform and choir loft, all the beautiful oak paneling, the arch between the church and the former Sunday School room, the redecorating of walls and refinishing of the pews. The organ was modernized by having an electric action installed and the great organ placed under expression. The new circular type console detached from the organ was placed in front of the choir.

This opportunity came at a time—during the worst of the depression—when a great deal could be done with \$5,000. The improvement was greatly needed and added much to the house of worship. Mr. Paul W. Hartung was chairman of the committee in charge.

### REVISED CONSTITUTION ADOPTED

A revised and modern constitution was adopted by the congregation in 1926. The consistory has consisted of a faithful group of men all these years—six elders and twelve deacons. The new constitution provided for more frequent changes in the personnel of the consistory, so that more of the men might have the experience of serving a term, or more, on the consistory. The provision was that a consistory man is eligible for re-election only once. He must then be out of office at least one year, whereupon he will be eligible again. The church has never lacked for men able and willing to carry on the leadership of the church. Although the women have equal rights with the men, no women have ever served on the consistory. At a special meeting of the congregation on September 20, 1936, a change in the constitution was effected, so that the number of elders was changed from six to eight, and the number of deacons from twelve to sixteen.

### CHANGE IN SERVING THE HOLY COMMUNION

In the spring of 1932, the congregation decided to inaugurate the new method of serving the elements in the Lord's Supper to the congregation in the pews. Heretofore the participants gathered at the altar. As stated elsewhere, the congregation was disposed to make changes progressively, and this change proved to be good.

### THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OBSERVED, OCTOBER 1935

The One Hundred Twenty-fifth Anniversary of our church was duly observed in October 1935 with special services and programs. Dr. Charles E. Schaeffer of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Dr. T. P. Bolliger of Madison, Wisconsin, and Dr. E. P. Herbruck were special speakers for this great occasion.

As part of the observance, a twenty-page booklet, containing a sketch of the most recent history of First Reformed Church, written by the pastor, R. W. Blemker, was printed and distributed. Also contained therein was a directory of the officers, leaders and workers in the church, which is a valuable record of interest.

This 125th Anniversary observance was an occasion for repairs and renovation on the church building, such as cleaning the walls of the church and Sunday School auditorium, painting the ceilings, redecorating the class rooms, laying new carpet in the Sunday School auditorium, etc. The Property committee of which Mr. Sam Bachtel was chairman, worked hard to beautify our church edifice for this occasion. The cost of these improvements was in the neighborhood of \$1500.

The General Planning Committee for the Anniversary Observance consisted of the following:

William Daberko, Chairman, Rev. R. W. Blemker, Orren Baab, Samuel Bachtel, John H. Deibel, Anna Enzmann, Mrs. Henry Ernst, Leah Neher, Edward F. Offenburger, E. D. Okey, Paul G. Schneider, Minnie Snyder, Albert Trachsel, and Lydia Witschi.

### **MERGER OF REFORMED AND EVANGELICAL CHURCH**

A great historic event took place in Cleveland, Ohio, on June 26, 1934 when the Reformed Church in the United States and the Evangelical Synod of North America united to form the Evangelical and Reformed Church. These denominations together represent a membership of approximately 850,000 Christian people. Our local church was represented at these sessions by our pastor, the Reverend Blemker and Elder Primarius, Carl F. Spanagel. This merger necessitated changing the legal name of our church from "First German Reformed Church" to "First Evangelical and Reformed Church." The change was approved by the congregation on September 15, 1940.

### **NEW CONSTITUTION ADOPTED**

Denominational changes as well as needed local changes called for a new constitution to replace the one which had been in use for fifteen years. A committee worked diligently to incorporate all articles beneficial to the smooth operation and government of the affairs of the church. The new constitution was adopted by the congregation on November 16, 1941.

### **NEW PARSONAGE**

In February 1940, the consistory was faced with two major problems—one of rehabilitating the old basement of the church for a youth room, the other of making extensive repairs on the parsonage which had been inhabited by our ministers and their families over fifty years. The old house was badly infested with termites. The congregation voted to proceed with the plans as worked out by the consistory. However, when the cost of the needed repairs on the parsonage was carefully considered, it was deemed inadvisable to make such repairs. Therefore, the cause of building a new parsonage was presented to the congregation, and approved. The cost of the new home was approximately \$11,000. This was a fine addition to our church property.

### **ORDINATION OF DONALD J. BARTHELMEH**

A significant service took place in First Reformed Church when one of her sons, Donald J. Barthelmeh, was ordained to the Gospel Ministry, in June 1942. It was an impressive service in which the entire congregation took a deep interest. One of his professors, Dr. Purd E. Deitz of Webster Groves, Mo., preached the ordination sermon. Reverend Barthelmeh is the youngest son of the late Mr. J. J. Barthelmeh and Mrs. Barthelmeh. One of his grandfathers was the sainted Reverend Cornelius Schimmel, whose pastorate was that of the Evangelical Church of Baltic. Reverend Barthelmeh was elected to the pastorate of the Carrollton Evangelical and Reformed Church. Later, he served at St. Paul's Evangelical and Reformed Church at Marietta, Ohio, and is presently the pastor of Immanuel United Church at Zanesville, Ohio.



## **TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF REVEREND BLEMKER'S PASTORATE**

Twenty-five years of outstanding service by Reverend Blemker to First Reformed Church deserved fine tribute on the part of the congregation. Special services were held morning and evening on April 15, 1945 with a reception in the Parish House following the evening Fellowship Service. Capacity audiences were present at both services. Reverend Blemker's long-time friend, the Reverend William F. Kissel presided at the morning service. Dr. L. W. Goebel, President of the Evangelical and Reformed Church of Chicago, Illinois, preached the anniversary sermon, and the choir supplied special music. The late Judge A. C. L. Barthelmeh presided over the evening service. Dr. H. Nevin Kerst and the Reverend Donald J. Barthelmeh had part in the evening service. Reverend Blemker spoke on "Reminiscences." He paid special tribute to William Daberko and Paul Schneider, leaders of our Sunday School, who were unusually helpful to him in his work; also to Mrs. Olive Stock, organist, and Mrs. Hilda Ernst, who, for over twenty years inspired the congregation with good music, and to Mrs. Blemker who has been a "helpmate" indeed. At the end of the service, the congregation presented a love gift to Reverend Blemker. At the close of the day, the pastor and congregation felt that it had been a perfect day—a day which the Lord had made, and all were glad and rejoiced in it.

## **REVEREND BLEMKER'S PASTORATE ENDS**

Upon the completion of twenty-five years of service in our Church, Reverend Blemker tendered his resignation in order that our congregation might secure younger leadership and that he might seek a new pastorate in a field where the work would be less arduous. The Consistory, however, felt that Reverend Blemker's services were still needed here and prevailed upon him to reconsider. He expressed his willingness to continue for a time until our service men from overseas returned home. A year later, he again submitted his resignation since he was convinced that the future best interests of First Reformed Church demanded a young vigorous man. His services were terminated at the end of May, 1946.

That the work of Pastor Blemker was overwhelmingly strenuous is reflected in the following statistics: Marriages performed, 739; Baptisms administered, 923; Funeral Services conducted, 1070; New Members received, 2114.

Reverend Blemker's pastorate was outstanding: His faithful devotion to duties his sincere Christian spirit, his love for every member of the Church, his fine example of Christian living, his influence upon the lives of young and old, his knowledge of the German language, and his teaching of the Gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ — all combined to make him a true servant of the Master. He enjoyed loyal support and co-operation on the part of the Consistory as well as the lay membership. He and his family were very happy in our midst.

A farewell service was held on May 31, 1946. The spirit of the service was that of praise and thanksgiving and of cheerful anticipation for the future. As Reverend Blemker took leave, it was his hope that the people of the congregation would accept his love and his gratitude to God for having been allowed to be their pastor for twenty-six years and to have learned to know intimately so many fine, noble, and brave people. His admonition was that we may "Grow in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ."

Upon leaving Canton, Reverend Blemker took over a small church in Bascom, Ohio. This congregation was a merger of two small congregations, Methodist and Reformed. He helped them to complete a merger and build a new church. After seven years in Bascom, Rev. and Mrs. Blemker were ready to retire and live in Florida. During the last year, however, Mrs. Blemker became ill with a heart condition which ended her earthly life in August 1953. Reverend Blemker now resides in St. Petersburg, Florida.

#### PERSONAL NOTES OF INTEREST

In addition to his church duties, Reverend Blemker served as a director of the Y.M.C.A., two terms as president of Canton Stark County Ministers' Association, and four years as head of Canton Council of Religious Education and Vacation Bible Schools. He was also active in Churchmen's Luncheon Club and in Red Cross and Community Fund drives. For over twenty years, Reverend Blemker was a trustee of Heidelberg College. He served also as president of the Ohio Synod of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, and repeatedly as delegate to the General Synod.

Daughter Margaret is in her tenth year as secretary for Europe and the Near East in the American Board, now the United Board of International Missions for both the Congregational Church and our own Evangelical and Reformed Church. She makes frequent administrative trips to the Near East countries where the United Church is doing missionary work. She is a graduate of Heidelberg College and received her Master's degree in Syracuse University. In 1958, Heidelberg College conferred upon her the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters.

Elizabeth married Reverend Robert B. Frey. They are doing outstanding work in organizing and developing from grass roots a new Evangelical and Reformed Church in St. Petersburg, Florida. The church after seven years numbers six hundred resident members. The Freys have two children.

Martha, the youngest daughter, is Mrs. Robert J. Troup, and lives in Upper Sandusky, Ohio, the mother of three fine boys.

Reverend Blemker's life has indeed been rich and abundant. May the Lord bless him with many loving memories of First Reformed Church in the evening of his life.

## THE PASTORATE OF REV. KARL KOEPKE, S.T.D.

*(Doctor of Sacred Theology)*

UPON the resignation of Dr. R. W. Blemker in March 1946, Mr. Joseph Huntley, a student for the ministry in the Theological Seminary at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, was engaged by the consistory to spend his summer vacation in our church as student supply. He filled the pulpit until the new minister arrived and then assisted him for the rest of the vacation period until September.



Rev. Karl Koepke, S.T.D

The consistory appointed a pulpit committee to secure a new pastor. This committee consisted of the following members: Paul G. Schneider, Chairman, Mrs. David Binns, Mrs. Chester Lyle, Judge A. C. L. Barthelmeh, Carl Spanagel, William Daberko, Ralph Kressly and Edward Okey.

The committee, charged with the responsibility of the selection of a pastor, worked very diligently for a number of months. During this period a total of forty-three visits were made to various churches by the committee members and others who were asked to go. A total of three thousand one hundred and fifty miles were traveled by rail and by auto.

A concentrated interest was finally centered in Fort Wayne, Ind.,

and Dr. Karl Koepke was unanimously chosen by the pulpit committee and the consistory to be the pastoral nominee to be voted upon by the congregation. Dr. Koepke accepted the challenge and preached his trial sermon to a large and appreciative congregation on Sunday, June 2, 1946. A vote was taken immediately following the service and five hundred forty-six members gave favorable approval of extending a call to Dr. Koepke.

A call tendered to Dr. Koepke was extended by the consistory and in his acceptance, Dr. Koepke agreed to begin his work in First Church on Sunday, July 28, 1946. He was installed by Dr. M. E. Beck, President of Southeast Ohio Synod, Dr. H. N. Kerst, and Jay L. Goodin on Sunday evening, September 29, 1946.

Our ninth and present pastor was born in New Knoxville, Ohio in 1906. While he is the ninth pastor of First Church, he is the thirtieth member of the First Evangelical and Reformed Church of New Knoxville, Ohio to enter the Christian ministry. Mrs. Koepke is the twenty-fourth



daughter of the New Knoxville church to choose life in a parsonage. In 1953 Life Magazine listed the New Knoxville Church in picture and article as one of the twelve famous churches in the United States that year.

Both Reverend and Mrs. Koepke had their elementary and high school education in the New Knoxville schools. Choice of colleges was a different matter. He studied and was graduated from Lakeland College, Plymouth, Wisconsin in 1928, and she received her A.B. degree from Heidelberg College, Tiffin, Ohio, in 1930. They were united in marriage in First Church, New Knoxville, on July 26, 1932. Dr. Koepke's parents are both deceased. His mother died in 1930 during his last year in seminary and his father in 1945. A twin brother resides at Mt. Lebanon, Pa. and an older sister in Cullman, Arizona.

Seminary courses and studies were pursued at Mission House Seminary, Wisconsin, and in June 1931, Rev. Koepke was graduated, receiving a Bachelor of Divinity degree. Further studies became possible at Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and at Commencement exercises in June of 1938, Temple University awarded our pastor the degree of Doctor of Sacred Theology. (S.T.D.)



#### 1960 CONSISTORY

*Top Row:* Ted Dunlap, Ralph Maurer, Charles W. Offenburger, Verl Shearer, Richard Zahler, Darel Weaver, Robert Young, Alexander Sollie.

*Middle Row:* Dr. Karl Koepke, Marvin Hohler, Clarence Marburger, Sam Ruefly, Donald Haas, Perry Shearer, Dean Lorson, Norman Tschantz, Don Long.

*Front Row:* Harold Bollinger, William Walker, Jr., Karl Fahrner, Harry Schmuck, Carl O. Weis, George Casper, Edward Offenburger, Paul Boldt, Sr.

Upon graduation from the Seminary in 1931, Rev. Koepke's first pastoral charge was the congregation of St. John's Evangelical and Reformed Church, LaCrosse, Wisconsin. In April of 1935 he was called to the pastorate of Salem-Zion Church, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In the summer of 1939 he accepted a call to the pastorate of Salem Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana, where he served until he was called to be our pastor in Canton in 1946.

Besides attending to his pastoral duties in churches he has served, Dr. Koepke has also freely given himself to wider circles in church, synod, and community. The following fields of interest can be listed: Secretary of the Ministers' Associations in all four cities where he has served churches. At present, he is serving his sixth term as secretary of the Canton and Stark County Ministers' Association, which group he served previously as president for two years. While president of the local group, he served as general chairman of the highly successful Charles Templeton Preaching Mission in 1953. He also served as the first vice president of the Council of Churches of Christ in Canton and Vicinity.

Synod-wise he has served Southeast Ohio Synod as Vice President for three years, and as chairman of the Church and Ministry Committee for six years. In 1959 Synod elected him a delegate to the General Synod at Oberlin, Ohio, and last July he again represented Synod at the General Synod meeting in Cleveland when the Constitution of the merger Church (United Church of Christ) was adopted.

While pastor in Fort Wayne, Rev. Koepke was secretary of the Board of Trustees of the Fort Wayne Children's Home for six years. He was also a member of the Board of Trustees of Heidelberg College for four years, representing Michigan-Indiana Synod.

Mrs. Koepke, before her marriage, taught high school in Buckland, Ohio for two years. She studied voice, piano and organ at Heidelberg College. Her music training began at the age of seven with her cousin, who was later to be missionary to Japan along with her husband, the Reverend Mr. Gilbert Schroer. Mrs. Koepke served as organist at St. John's Church, LaCrosse.

Mrs. Koepke's parents are still residing in New Knoxville, Ohio. She is the oldest of four children. Her sister is also a graduate of Heidelberg College, while her two brothers are graduates of Lakeland College and Mission House Seminary, both serving as pastors of Evangelical and Reformed churches: Rev. N. B. Wierwill, St. John's Church at Archbold, Ohio, and Rev. L. L. Wierwill, Immanuel Church at Lafayette, Indiana. Rev. and Mrs. Koepke have five cousins and an aunt and uncle who are, or have been, ministers or missionaries of the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Here in Canton, Mrs. Koepke serves our congregation in every phase and area of activity and life. Along with all these tasks to which she dutifully gives herself, she and Rev. Koepke seek to give their only daughter, Kathleen, aged twelve, a happy and normal life in the parsonage.

A photograph in full vestment in natural colors of our pastor, Dr. Koepke, was made by a local photographer, framed in blue-gray antique oak frame, and presented to the church. This beautiful picture has been hung in the main narthex of the church.





## OUR CHURCH LIFE — 1946 - 1950

### NOTEWORTHY EVENTS

A number of large and worthy projects loomed during the first several years of Dr. Koepke's pastorate. Our congregation has been known to respond generously to every denominational appeal and so it was, that under Dr. Koepke's leadership, the congregation contributed \$1500 to the Building Fund of the Upper Sandusky Home for the Aged; \$2500 toward the Fort Wayne Children's Home for new buildings; and \$1300 for the Heidelberg Centennial Development program. This was also the time

when there was great need for help in the war stricken countries. For three years, our church carried on a relief service beyond the assigned denominational quota of \$7100, by gathering and sending some six thousand pounds of clothing and shoes to two Reformed congregations in Germany, the one in Lienen in Westphalia (Rev. Blemker's home town), the other to the French Reformed congregation in Frankfurt. Besides clothing and shoes, \$2250 was sent to the Frankfurt church for their rebuilding project. These funds made possible all seats and pews in the nave of the church, the central heating system, the chancel and communion table, and the lighting fixtures. Emergency World Service is still being carried on. Our congregation gives willingly and gladly for the relief of the suffering in any part of the world.

Von der  
First Evangelical and Reformed Church in Canton  
Ohio, U.S.A.

wurden für den Kirchenbau mehrere höhere Beträge gestiftet, die es ermöglichten, die Inneneinrichtung der Kirche zweckmäßig und würdig zu gestalten. Es konnten aus diesen Mitteln beschafft werden:

Das Gestühl,  
Kanzel und Abendmahlstisch,  
die Beleuchtung i. Kirchenraum,  
die Zentralheizung.

Die brüderliche Hilfe unserer amerikanischen Schwesterkirche soll uns an die ökumenische Verpflichtung unserer Gemeinde erinnern.

Frankfurt-Main, den 11. Nov. 1951.

Das Konsistorium der franz. ref. Kirche.

Präsident: Adolf  
Hofmann

Präsident: 19. Hofmann

Plaque Erected In Frankfurt Church

The 1950 Yearbook of the Evangelical and Reformed Church shows First Church, Canton to be among the first ten in amount of benevolent giving.

It was also during this period that the Finance Committee of the Consistory proposed on May 6, 1947, that an amount of \$20,000 be raised for outside and inside rehabilitation of the church property, to be collected over a five year period. This undertaking received approval and a Rehabilitation Fund was established. Mrs. Ethel Henninger was designated as Financial Secretary of the Rehabilitation Fund. Mrs. Henninger had

been in charge of special funds for some years. She is familiar with all aspects of our church finances, having served as secretary to Mr. William Feller, who was in charge of finances for the building of our Parish House. Mrs. Henninger works faithfully, quietly, and devotedly. The church appreciates her fine service.

A special envelope to be used quarterly by the members for contributions to the Rehabilitation Fund was placed in each packet. In this way, some major repairs began. Physical improvements to 1950 included the following: In 1948, new stained glass windows were installed in the north wall of the Sunday School room. These "Evangelists" windows are memorials by families of the church. Later all other windows in the Sunday School room were also replaced with stained glass. These too, were donated by members of the church to honor the memory of loved ones. The interior of the church was redecorated regularly. New Cathedral type lighting fixtures were installed in the nave of the church in 1948. In the summer of 1949, the old heating system was replaced with the newest



#### THE SENIOR CHOIR

*Top Row:* Paul Foltz, Herman Sturm, Andrew Gabor, William Walker, Jr., Charles Blair.

*Third Row:* Marvin Hohler, Albert Guillod, Karl Fahrner, Harold Bollinger, Earle Patterson, Gustav Alteholz, Bolton Strauch, Mrs. Robert Turner, Mrs. James Olinger.

*Second Row:* Mrs. Goebel Yeary, Mrs. Gust Schwitzgable, Mrs. Helen Colloredo, Mrs. Chester Lyle, Miss Janet Schwitzgable, Mrs. Charles Boone, Mrs. Robert Yeary.

*Front Row:* Mrs. Virgil Hinton, Mrs. Thomas Zahler, Mrs. Austin Stock, Miss Joan Drechsler, Mrs. Neilson Pickering, Mrs. Leslie Hanson, Mrs. Lucile Huckels, Mrs. Virgil Hiltner, Mrs. Andrew Gabor.

type automatic gas fired boilers. The west tower of the church was removed because it was beyond repair. The church spire had been razed some years before because of deteriorated condition.

#### **WORSHIP ATMOSPHERE CREATED BY USE OF GOWNS**

It was at Easter time 1947 that white gowns were used by the Confirmation Class for the first time. The choir had been robed in black gowns for some years, but in the spring of 1948 new maroon colored gowns with white stoles were dedicated. Some time later, new choir gowns were also supplied for the Junior Choir. This was a means to create a more worshipful atmosphere.

#### **MRS. HANNAH TRESSLER'S 100TH BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY OBSERVED**

One of the members, Mrs. Hannah Tressler, a resident at the Home for the Aged at Upper Sandusky, reached the high age of 100 years. In the name of the Consistory and all the members of our church, Pastor Koepke took greetings and a twenty-five dollar gift to Mrs. Tressler in person, on February 26, 1947. We all rejoiced on this occasion that it was possible for Mrs. Tressler to enjoy the finest and most loving care at the hands of those who served her at the Home. Dr. Koepke said: "Life is a gift from God. And as long as we live, we have some God-given and God-assigned purpose to fulfill. So we look upon your long life as teaching us one great principle and truth of life: With God at our side, never give up, never despair, the future is bright. As God carries us here, through His servants and through His gifts unto us, so does He open to us also at life's end the portals of Heaven to receive us into glory." Mrs. Tressler died at the age of 101.

#### **TWO EASTER SERVICES INAUGURATED**

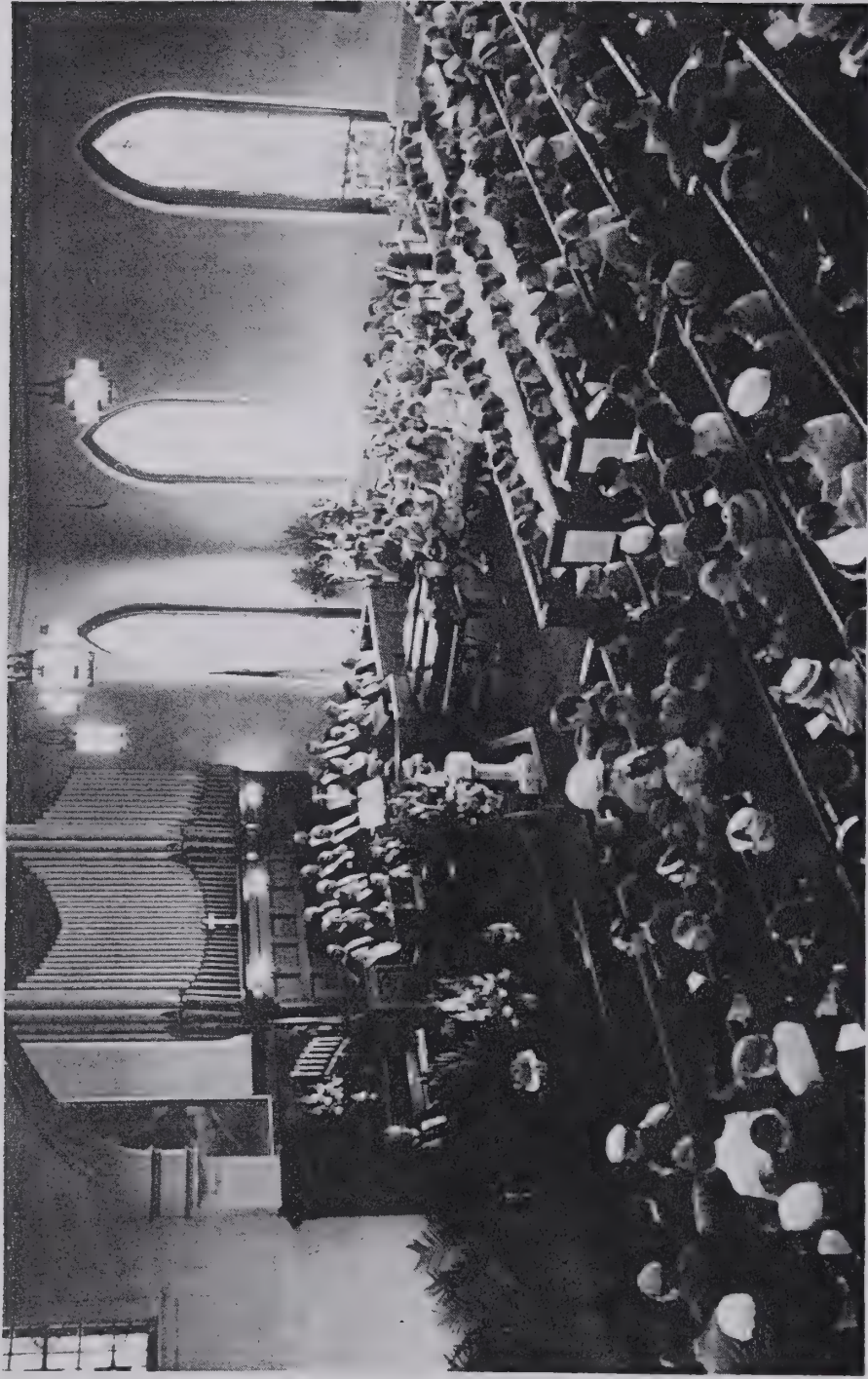
The large attendance at Easter services created a problem. In 1948, eleven hundred people came to First Church for worship. In March 1950, the consistory took action to inaugurate two Easter services, the first to be held at 8:00 o'clock, the Sunday School service to follow, and the second Easter service to be held at 10:00 o'clock. On April 14, 1950 it was thus possible for fourteen hundred worshippers to attend the Easter rites.

#### **CONSECRATED WORKERS HONORED**

There are scores of men and women who have given of themselves in the service of First Church. However, we feel that several should be mentioned who were given special recognition during the period 1946-1950.

In December 1948, after eighteen years as General Superintendent of the Church School, Paul G. Schneider was honored for his efficient leadership. During his tenure of office there was a reorganization of the School and a new emphasis upon Christian Education in all departments. The Superintendent's Cabinet was inaugurated. This organization consisted of the general officers and the departmental superintendents to transact the business and to formulate the program for each age group.





PALM SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE 1960

For many years Mr. Schneider has been active on the Board of the Canton Community Leadership Training School, an interdenominational school to better prepare teachers and leaders. For eight years he served as dean of this school.

In addition to local and community activities, Mr. Schneider has served as a delegate to General Synod. In 1942 he was elected by General Synod to serve our Denomination as a member of the General Council. This body meets semi-annually and is responsible for administrative work of the Church between the triennial session of the General Synod. He served in this capacity for two terms, a period of twelve years, and during this period was assigned responsibility on the finance committee of General Council. He made numerous trips to the St. Louis office to go over audit reports of the various Boards and Agencies of the Denomination.

Our church has been fortunate to have in our midst a man so consecrated and of deep concern regarding the spiritual welfare of First Reformed Church. One of our pastors in speaking of his work among us, said that Paul Schneider reminds him of Timothy—a great tribute indeed.

The position of General Superintendent of the Church School is now held, and has been held for the past ten years, by Charles J. Blair, who is most proficient and a most capable leader in this work. His genial personality and devotion to this very important work go a long way to uphold the fine standards of our school.

Another faithful worker to be honored during this time was Miss Leah Neher who rendered her services as a teacher in the Sunday School for sixty years. She was a thorough student of the Bible and a devoted Christian woman.

The resignation of Frank Fullwood, Scout master of our Church Troop No. 30 was received in February 1947. Mr. Fullwood had served in this capacity for twenty years and had done very fine work with the scouts. His work was gratefully acknowledged. Mr. Ed Hesslink also has worked with Scout Troop No. 30 for more than twenty years. His influence upon the lives of these boys has been marked.

Here we also wish to state that Miss Ruth Currie has served with a Girl Scout Troop in our church for many, many years. She has done much good work quietly and efficiently. Miss Currie is still active in this work at present.

In June 1947, recognition was accorded Mr. Henry J. Boldt for services rendered in the publishing of "The Helper" since its inception in 1921. The congregation expressed its thanks to him for his untiring efforts. His work had always been prompt and of high quality, reflecting his deep interest in the welfare of the church. It was indeed a labor of love. He was forced to relinquish his work in September 1951 due to illness.



### THE FISHERMEN'S CLUB

In February 1947, Dr. Koepke challenged the members of the congregation to follow in the footsteps of the Master and become Fishers of Men. The members accepted the challenge and became very active in bringing new members into the church. This work was under the guidance of the Evangelism Committee of the consistory of which Ralph Kressly was the chairman. That the efforts of the committee and the members were effective, is proven by the fact that on Easter 1947, ninety-five new members were received into the church, twenty-two of whom were in the 1947 Confirmation Class.

The record for February 27, 1948 indicates that seven hundred worshippers were in attendance at the morning service, evidence of sincerity in the matter of spiritual and religious growth. On World-Wide Communion Sunday, October 6, 1950, nine hundred members partook of the Communion.

### PERSONAL CONTACT WITH FRANKFURT AND LIENEN CHURCHES

Our congregation was delighted to send letters of greeting to the French Reformed Church in Frankfurt, Germany, and to the congregation in Lienen, Germany, with Mr. Daberko, who, on a vacation trip to Germany in the summer of 1950, planned to visit these churches which had been the recipients of money, clothing, and shoes from our congregation. Mr. Daberko's report upon his return was that of unspeakable gratitude on the part of these unfortunate Christian people, who had seen the worst ravages of war. Displaced persons and refugees were supplied with clothing and shoes, distributed by these churches. A letter of thanks was also received by the consistory from the Executive Secretary of the Commission on World Service as well as from the Frankfurt and Lienen congregations in appreciation of our gifts.



French Reformed Church, Frankfurt, Germany



## **MERGER OF EVANGELICAL AND REFORMED CHURCH WITH CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

For some time, a merger of the Evangelical and Reformed Church with the Congregational Christian Church had been envisioned by the leaders of these two churches and much preliminary work had preceded the merger meeting which was held on May 3, 1949 in Cleveland. At this meeting, General Synod approved the merger to form the "United Church of Christ." This action was then submitted to the thirty-three Synods of our denomination for approval.

On February 17, 1950, the proposed merger of the Congregational Christian Church with the Evangelical and Reformed Church was halted by court order upon suit filed by the Cadman Memorial Church of Brooklyn, New York.

While the final merger was delayed, nevertheless it came about and after much work, prayer, and conciliation, the merger was effected in July 1959 at Oberlin, Ohio, and at the adjourned meeting held in Cleveland, Ohio in July 1960, a new constitution was adopted unanimously. The constitution must now be ratified by two-thirds of the congregations voting among the 5,506 Congregational Christian Churches, and by two-thirds of the thirty-three Synods in the Evangelical and Reformed Church comprised of 2,753 congregations. The two groups have a combined membership of approximately 2,200,000 people.

### **140TH ANNIVERSARY OBSERVED**

The congregation reached another milestone in October 1950 when it observed the 140th Anniversary. It is always good to look back upon work accomplished and to count the many blessings which we have received from God during the years of our church life, to be grateful for all the opportunities of service which the church gives us, and to look forward with hope, courage, and anticipation to the future. Anniversary celebrations permit us to reminisce and present a challenge to carry on, striving ever to lift our spirits to higher and nobler thoughts and deeds.

Charles J. Blair was in charge of arrangements for this celebration. Dr. Nevin C. Harner was the speaker for the October 29th morning service. He chose as his subject, "Perennial Purpose of the Church." An evening Fellowship Service was held for which Dr. Blemker, Dr. M. E. Beck, and Rev. D. J. Barthelmeh had been invited to speak. A Fellowship Tea followed in the Parish House social rooms.

In the Sunday School Service, Mrs. Lydia Loliger and William Daberko were the chosen speakers to bring appropriate messages.

The Anniversary Services were attended by a large group of members, nine hundred in the morning service and six hundred thirty-five in the evening service.

A "140th Anniversary" booklet was published and sent to every member family. Henry S. Ernst was in charge of the layout of this 12-page publication.



## **OUR CHURCH LIFE — 1951 - 1955**

### **CHURCH EDIFICE**

For some time the consistory of our congregation had been aware that our physical plant was aging and that it was imperative that their efforts should center around the proper upkeep, and if possible to beautify the church. Not only was the consistory cognizant of these conditions, some of our church members were as well. In 1951, a member of the congregation donated \$1,000 for the beginning of the establishment of a fund for a new church edifice, or the purchase of a new site. This gift was gratefully received by the consistory. It would never be possible for the church to launch a new building program without some forethought and farsight into the future on the part of someone. This then was a nucleus. Since that time, the consistory has established a "Reserve Fund" which grows by means of action taken by the consistory in November 1954, making a distribution of the "Rehabilitation Fund" on the basis of 66-2/3% to the Rehabilitation Fund and 33-1/3% to the Reserve Fund. At the end of 1955, the "Reserve Fund" had reached the amount of \$3,529.63.

### **MAJOR PROJECTS — REPAIRS AND IMPROVEMENTS**

In January 1951 the sloping floor in the church was leveled to conform with the floor in the Sunday School room and new carpet, red with a small figured pattern, was laid in the church and Sunday School room at a cost of approximately \$10,000.

The Memorial Stained Glass Windows in the Sunday School room were dedicated in October 1951.

A new Public Address System was installed.

The Office was remodeled.

The Kitchen was modernized: New floor covering installed, new lights in ceiling, sinks and cupboards changed, and the room painted. A new stove, long overdue, was purchased.

The Nursery, Classrooms, and Gymnasium were re-roofed.

New steps were built into the side entrance vestibule.

The Nursery Room was enlarged.

Exterior of the church was painted.

A partition between two balcony classrooms was removed.

New tables and chairs were purchased for the dining room in the Parish House.

The consistory felt that some long-range planning should be initiated to raise the necessary funds to meet the cost of these repairs. It was decided that a monthly envelope be inserted in members' offering boxes for contributions to the Rehabilitation Fund and possible building expansion. Heretofore, an envelope was used quarterly.



The improvements provided more adequate facilities for carrying on the extensive Sunday School and Church programs and added much to the promotion of fellowship among our members. Our church edifice was enhanced and made truly a beautiful place for worship.

#### **MARKET HEIGHTS CHURCH ESTABLISHED**

In September 1951, Southeast Ohio Synod purchased lots on Market Avenue North between 31st and 32nd Streets for the purpose of establishing a new Reformed Church in Canton. The cost of the lots for church and parsonage was \$15,000. Our church contributed \$4680 for the Market Heights Mission Church.

#### **1953 EVANGELISTIC CAMPAIGN**

Community Evangelistic Services were held from January 25 to February 8, 1953 in the new Memorial Auditorium. Dr. Koepke was chosen as Chairman of the General Committee and Rev. Donald G. Lester of the First United Presbyterian Church as Executive Director of the Mission. The Evangelist was a powerful speaker, the 36 year old Dr. Charles Templeton of the International Council of Churches in America. Our congregation took a very great interest in this project which was a highly successful venture.

A Home Visitation Program was conducted previous to these services. Twenty-nine new members were added to the membership of our church as a result of this Evangelistic Campaign.

#### **POSSIBLE MERGER WITH TRINITY EVANGELICAL AND REFORMED CHURCH**

On July 9, 1953, an unofficial group representing First Church and Trinity Church met for the purpose of discussing in open meeting some mutual problems besetting both congregations as concerns membership, buildings, location of properties and the possible future of both congregations. The present locations and facilities of both churches were considered unfavorable for future growth and work.

The only action of the July 9 meeting was a proposal to be presented to both Consistories, that each Consistory appoint a special committee to explore:

1. Whether it would be feasible or logical for the two congregations to consider merging as one congregation and as such seek to do unitedly the work each seeks now to do separately; and, whether this is the propitious time to consider relocating the buildings to some other strategic location in the city, the merged congregation erecting one instead of two buildings.
2. Whether it would be economically sound to simply keep on making extensive repairs to the present edifices.

At a special meeting of the Consistory this proposal was discussed and carefully considered and a committee was appointed to meet with a committee from Trinity Church to explore these questions further.

A letter was mailed to each member of the congregation presenting this problem and explaining that every member would be given every opportunity for personal expression of his views. Subsequently, a congregational meeting was held on September 30, 1953 for the purpose of the presentation of facts, answering questions, and open discussion, to enable each member to come to a decision at a later date when the actual vote would be taken on the question of the merging of First Evangelical and Reformed Church and Trinity Evangelical and Reformed Church, and the building of a new church edifice by the merged bodies. This meeting was attended by about 240 members. There was full discussion, many questions raised and answered, and the people left with a better understanding of the problems involved.

On April 6, 1954, the Consistory decided to send a letter to every confirmed member and to take an opinion poll regarding the merger and the building of a new church. There were 880 family letters mailed out on May 5, 1954. A total of seven hundred cards were received by return date, May 20. The questions submitted were:

1. Do you favor a merger of First and Trinity congregations in order that together they may build a new church in a new location?
2. Do you favor a merger of First and Trinity congregations in order that together they may build a new church on a five-acre tract at the Corner of Fulton Road and Blackburn Road in Avondale?
3. Remarks:
  - 424 voted "no" on first and second questions
  - 126 voted "yes" on first and second questions
  - 31 voted "yes" on first question
  - 35 voted "no" on first question
  - 66 voted "yes" on second question
  - 3 voted "no" on second question

Opinion poll remarks showed that our congregation definitely was not in favor of a merger with Trinity Church. Many members were in favor of a new church either on our present site or in a new location. Some members expressed favor to a merger with Market Heights Church.

On June 8, 1954 the committee on the Merger Proposal was discharged and a letter was sent to the Consistory of Trinity Church advising them of our action.

#### CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

On March 9, 1954, Charles J. Blair, Superintendent of the Sunday School, reported that the Church and Home Series of Bible Study was being discontinued in the Adult Department by a vote of the teachers, and that the Sunday School would return to using the International Bible lessons.

### **SOUTHEAST OHIO SYNOD GOALS**

Dr. Koepke, who attended the Southeast Ohio Synod meeting on May 11, and 12, 1954, reported a denominational goal of 20,000 new members for 1954 and a million dollar revolving fund to be raised by the Board of National Missions for new church buildings. A letter from the National Missions New Church Building Fund Chairman indicated our share to be \$2,795.

### **STUDENT FOR THE MINISTRY**

In December 1954, the consistory had the rare pleasure to recommend one of our fine young men, Robert K. Turner, to the Southeast Ohio Synod, as a ministerial student. He will take up his studies at Eden Theological Seminary, Webster Groves, Missouri.

### **TWO SERVICES DISCONTINUED**

The attendance and interest in the Palm Sunday Evening Service (The Confirmation Reunion Service) and the Preparatory Service on Wednesday evening of Holy Week has diminished. The consistory voted on March 1, 1955 to discontinue these services.

### **PARKING PROBLEM**

In addition to the many problems constantly facing the Property Committee, another one has been arising concerning parking facilities near the church. Public transportation is not used any longer to any great extent to bring our members to the church. Private cars have increased to the point where it is most difficult to find enough parking space. The possibility of buying land directly west of the church was investigated, but found not suitable and too high priced. A number of nearby business establishments have offered their parking space to the church for use on Sundays. This has tentatively relieved the problem.

\* \* \* \*

Thus another five year period in the history of our congregation came to an end. The congregation, the Sunday School, and all the organizations of the church, have been active in all phases of church work and have surmounted all difficulties, and with renewed effort looked forward to the future years in which to continue their work for the upbuilding of Christian ideals in the lives of the members of the congregation, and to lend a helping hand whenever and wherever possible.



## OUR CHURCH LIFE — 1956 - 1960

### ADDITIONAL IMPROVEMENTS IN CHURCH EDIFICE

At the suggestion of Dr. Koepke, the Neher Bible Classroom was converted into a small chapel for small weddings, baptisms, etc. The room was carpeted, new chairs, draperies, a new piano, and an altar center were provided. Much use has been found for this very attractive room, now known as the Neher Chapel.

The church building was insulated with cellulose fiber six inches deep at a cost of \$1768. Immediately after, in the summer of 1956, the entire interior of the church was painted at a cost of \$3950.

Changes and improvements were also made to the chancel. A wide stair in the center, leading to the altar, now placed directly below the beautiful painting of Christ in Gethsemane, new altar covers, a new lectern, new microphones, a prie dieu (kneeling bench), new palms, two candelabra, and a cross, make for a worshipful atmosphere and a more modern sanctuary. Dedication of the new chancel took place in services on December 2, 1956.

New equipment such as an addressograph, mimeograph, and adding machine were provided for the church office.

In 1957, a passageway between the old and the new buildings was constructed. This was a decided improvement since it made it possible for members to enter the church from the east side without passing through one of the children's departments. At the completion of this hallway, many people wondered that no one had thought of this idea years ago.

Lights in the Kindergarten, Cradle Roll, Primary Department, Kitchen, and Office were replaced with fluorescent lights.

The choir room was remodeled, with new cabinets for choir music and gowns, floor coverings, etc.

Hearing aids were provided in various locations in the church.

The highlight, and finishing touch, came when the consistory voted to install new pews in our church auditorium. The pews decided on were red oak with bone white end paneling, and cushion covers. They were installed in October 1959 at a cost of \$8,650. A letter was sent to all members of the congregation informing them of the full particulars and data regarding the purchase of the pews, and pledges were secured for payment of same.

And here, we wish to state joyfully that all the repairs and improvements, including the pews are paid for in full.

### **CAMP FOR OHIO CHURCHES ESTABLISHED**

In February 1956, the four Ohio Synods purchased a one hundred acre site at \$100 per acre to establish a camp for Ohio churches. Early in 1957, the Ohio Church Camp Development Committee estimated that it would cost approximately \$125,000 to develop the camp and launched a campaign to raise that amount. Each church was asked to accept a pledge amounting to \$1.00 per member. Our quota, therefore, was \$1275. By Synod action the request for one dollar per member was repeated the following year. First Church was one of the first in Southeast Ohio Synod to respond to this call. In the two years, our members contributed \$2550 to this worthy cause for the youth of our congregations. This camp located near Mansfield is now named "Templed Hills" and already some of our young people have reaped the benefits and have been inspired by attendance at this fine retreat.

### **COUNCIL OF CHURCHES**

Early in January 1957, meetings were held for the purpose of initiating a Council of Protestant Churches in our city. In April of this year, our consistory decided to join the Council of Churches, six delegates to be selected to represent First Church. Subsequently, our pastor was elected by the Council to serve as its Vice President.

### **SPECIAL CELEBRATIONS**

A special service of recognition was held on June 24, 1956 for Dr. Koepke in honor of the 25th anniversary of his ordination and the 10th anniversary of his pastorate in our Church. The deep appreciation of the congregation for the fine service he has rendered in our midst was expressed in a generous purse given to him with appropriate sentiments at the close of the Sunday morning service.

A very happy occasion also took place on July 26, 1957 when the congregation held a reception at the Canton Garden Center for Dr. and Mrs. Koepke to honor their 25th wedding anniversary. The large attendance, the well-planned affair, the many gifts and the happy fellowship were evidence of the high esteem of the people for our good pastor and his good wife.

June 23, 1957 was the date of another celebration, namely the 40th Anniversary of Mrs. Olive Stock as organist of our church. Contributions from organizations and individual members in the sum of \$500 were presented to Mrs. Stock to express their love and appreciation. At the same time recognition was afforded Mrs. Mary Hanson who has ably served as our choir director for eleven years. A most happy relationship existed between choir directors and Mrs. Stock during the long time of service rendered. Mrs. Stock was imbued with good music and her interpretation of the music of the masters was superb. She led the congregation in worship with the organ for over forty years. Her whole life was built around her work in this capacity. She truly loved her work. She retired in December 1958.

## INTERESTING FINANCIAL STATISTICS

It would not be possible to make a report on financial statistics without first mentioning our Financial Secretary, Carl Snyder, who has served in this capacity for thirty years. His faithfulness, accuracy, and devotion are outstanding. As an indication of the immensity of this work, we wish to state that his report showed the total receipts for the year 1959 to be \$53,393.24.

It is of interest to note the growth of the activities of the church as reflected in our budgets. The proposed budgets for comparative purposes were as follows:

			Totals
1947 Current Expenses	\$17,000	Benevolences .....	\$ 5,260 \$22,260
1955 Current Expenses	\$23,889	Benevolences .....	\$ 9,622 \$33,511
1960 Current Expenses	\$33,485	Benevolences:	
	(Apportionment to General Synod	\$ 9,775	
	(SEO Synod Contingent	1,741	
	(Church World Service	1,290	
	Total Benevolences	\$12,806	\$12,806 \$46,291

### Balances in Special Funds — June 30, 1960:

Rehabilitation .....	\$ 3,261.18
Reserve .....	22,786.34
(Use of this fund is restricted to capital improvement approved by the congregation)	
Bequests and Gifts .....	8,987.31
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>\$35,034.83</b>

The appraised value of our main church building is placed at \$432,000. The Inventory of Contents of the Church and Parish House is valued at \$35,000.

## DR. KOEPKE AS PASTOR

Our congregation has been very fortunate to have the services of Dr. Koepke during the past fourteen years. His energy appears to be unlimited. His sermons are always well prepared and full of good thoughts to urge his people to go out into the world and live the Gospel as he portrays it. The overflowing church attendance, Sunday by Sunday, attests to his good preaching. His winsome personality, his enthusiasm, his devotion to the Church and all the people, his alertness to all our needs, and his prayers lifting the congregation to higher plains, all combine to make him the pastor and minister that our congregation needs. Our records indicate that during his stay with us from July 1946 to August 1960:

- 913 Members have been received into the church
- 410 Marriages have been performed
- 782 Children have been baptized
- 437 Funerals have been conducted
- 947 Persons partook of the Holy Communion during Holy Week of 1960



Our pastor makes daily calls to the hospitals to visit our sick, to pray with them and give them courage and hope. Each day is filled with a multitude of tasks and meetings; he is the editor of our church paper, "The Helper;" and he is always ready to give help wherever needed. His concern for our congregation is exhibited in an article which appeared in one of the issues of our church paper:

"I am concerned that this shall be a living, working, loving, serving parish. First Church cannot be just a "pulpit." I hope that it can be a pulpit, and an effective one, but it must be more than this. It must be a family parish in which all members of all families of the church are confronted with the truth of the Gospel, with the claims of the living God, with the promises of grace.

"It must be a place where the whole church — infants, children, youth, young adults and older folk — worships, learns, studies, prays, works, serves. It must be a place where we encounter God; where we study our faith, its history and meaning; where we hear great music of



#### CHURCH STAFF AND ORGANIZATION PRESIDENTS

*Top Row:* Edward J. Okey, Dr. Karl Koepke, Philip Billings, Kenneth Geyer, Carl Aebi, Budd Harold, Miss Tana Keiser, George Casper.  
*Middle Row:* Miss Karen Boldt, Mrs. Floyd Perman, Mrs. Horace Reehl, Jr., Mrs. Goebel Yeary, Mrs. Pearl Wharmby, Mrs. Sam Ruefly, Mrs. Winifred Offenburger, Mrs. Lawrence Henninger, Miss Ruth Currie.  
*Front Row:* Mrs. Leslie D. Hanson, Mrs. Neilson Pickering, Mrs. Guy Hornbeck, Mrs. Gust Schwitzgable, Mrs. Roman Bosch, Mrs. George Yunginger, Mrs. Lucile Huckels, Mrs. Chester Lyle.

the church; where the Gospel of the living Christ is proclaimed and experienced and lived. It must be a place where the whole Christian enterprise, at home and abroad, is known and supported. In short, First Reformed Church must be a church — living, worshipping, serving community, indwelt by God's spirit."

The years of our church life since the coming of Dr. Koepke are marked by the continued and steady growth in numbers, in activity and enterprise. The church through pastor and people has kept pace with the changing times in presenting the changeless Christ, the Saviour of the World.

### 1960 — THE SESQUI-CENTENNIAL YEAR

Early in the year 1960, the Canton Council of Churches enlisted the aid of all its member churches in taking a Religious Census in Canton and vicinity. This visitation took place on January 10, 1960. The services of 150 of our members were needed. The names secured in this manner were submitted to the various churches as indicated by the people visited.

Another item of interest concerns the Home for Aged at Upper Sandusky, Ohio. Plans are under way for the building of a hospital wing to the Home. A pledge by our congregation for this purpose amounts to \$6,000 and is designated for the Superintendent's Office.

The consistory, acting upon Dr. Koepke's advice, began early to plan for an appropriate celebration of the 150th Anniversary of our Church. In October 1959, a General Planning Committee was chosen of which Mr. Charles J. Hill is the chairman, and Dr. Koepke an adviser. No fund raising campaign is planned; instead, our efforts will be directed toward obtaining 150 new members for First Church and worshipful observance of this memorable occasion. While emphasis will be given all through the year, and various groups recognized and honored, the celebration month will be October, when special services will be held on each Sunday of the month with Dr. F. W. Schroeder, President of Eden Theological Seminary, as our Anniversary speaker. A historical pageant will also be presented in October. One of the main features of the occasion is bringing to date, from the beginning, the history of First Reformed Church to the present, as portrayed in this printed booklet.

### GIFTS AND BEQUESTS

Since it is not possible to list all the gifts and bequests that have been made to the church through the years, we wish to acknowledge with sincere and heartfelt appreciation the many gifts and memorials which have been donated to our Church. The blessings and satisfactions experienced by the givers can never be measured. The outpouring of love by these members becomes a blessing also to the church as a whole, and

as these gifts are used in the service of the church, we remember with deep love and affection those in whose memory they were given. Let us also be grateful to those members who, week by week have given most sacrificially in loyal support of the church and its causes.

#### CLOSING REMARKS

In closing, let us mention some of the outstanding characteristics and virtues of our congregation:

One striking fact in the history of the church is its long pastorates. The present pastorate is only the ninth in this century and a half. To an extent, it may be due to the fact that our ministers have found themselves so fruitfully and satisfactorily occupied, that they found no time for restlessness, nor for any desire to change.

First Church is a family church—a church of families, many of whose names go back through five generations. If, as is customary, we



#### SESQUI-CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

*Top Row:* Guy Hornbeck, Edward D. Okey, Adolph Roos, Carl O. Weis, Edward Offenburger, Paul Boldt, Sr., Don Long.

*Middle Row:* Charles Hill, Charles Blair, Miss Anna Enzmann, Mrs. Leslie Hanson, Mrs. Carl Snyder, William Daberko, Paul Schneider, Sr., Dr. Karl Koepke.

*Front Row:* Mrs. Samuel Loliger, Mrs. Charles Blair, Miss Hilda Nelson, Mrs. Harry Bruey, Mrs. Chester Lyle, Mrs. David Binns, Mrs. Robert Holsing.



allow thirty years to a generation, then we who are now celebrating this Sesqui-centennial, stand on the shoulders, as it were, of five generations who have laid foundations and have made their contributions toward making First Church what it is.

We have a great heritage of piety, devotion, and loyalty. In other words, the generations have come and gone, but they are still speaking to us, and what they say is a real challenge to us and the oncoming generations.

Another striking thing about First Reformed Church is the part the laity has played and is playing in the affairs of the church. It is lay leadership of high quality and great devotion. The congregation as a whole has become a loyal, churchgoing, cooperative group with a real concern for the church and its many causes. In turn, the church has thus been enabled to bless the homes and the family life.



## OUR MEN AND WOMEN IN THE SERVICE OF OUR COUNTRY

THREE times since the turn of the century, the United States has been engaged in war. Each time, our young men and women answered the call to service. During World War I, a service flag bearing a star for each soldier in service, reminded the congregation day after day of the men who were fighting for freedom. The prayers and supplications of our congregation supplied, without doubt, the courage necessary for heroic effort.

World War II, which truly involved the whole world took one hundred seventy-nine men and women from our midst to serve our country. A roster with addresses was kept and members of the congregation were encouraged to write to them. Our church paper, "The Helper," and devotional booklets were mailed to them. Thus, even though away from home, they were aware that the church was mindful of them, praying, and interceding for them.

Seven fine young men gave their lives to the cause of freedom. A plaque bearing their names hangs in the nave of the church. It reads, "In Memory of the Members of First Church who made the Supreme Sacrifice in World War II —

James Focht  
Edward Gannon  
Homer Miller  
Maurice Niebel  
Victor Stauffer  
Dick Tschantz  
Gerald Welsbacher

I Have Fought a Good Fight,  
I Have Finished My Course  
I Have Kept the Faith  
II Timothy 4:7."

This tablet was sponsored by Mr. Edward Okey's Class and Erected by Members of the Congregation in 1948.

The Korean War which followed World War II, also took the life of one of our young men in the person of Ronald Sturm on September 14, 1950.

Our debt to them is unspeakable, and our hearts full of Christian sympathy. Our only comfort "that neither life nor death—nor any other creature can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord."

Thus—our love extends to Formosa, France, Germany, Italy, Iwo Jima, Yugoslavia, the South Pacific, and Korea.





CLASS OF SERVICE  
This is a fast message unless its deferred character is indicated by the proper symbol.

# WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM

W. P. MARSHALL, President

1220  
(R 11-54)

SYMBOLS  
DL = Day Letter  
NL = Night Letter  
LT = International Letter Telegram

The filing time shown in the date line on domestic telegrams is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination.

CTA096

B NRA099 CGN GOVT NL PD=NEWPORT RI JULY 14  
DR KARL KOEPKE FIRST EVANGELICAL AND REFORMED CHURCH=  
901 EAST TUSCARAWAS ST CANTON OHIO=

TO THE MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF THE FIRST EVANGELICAL AND  
REFORMED CHURCH OF CANTON JOINED IN THE OBSERVANCE OF  
THEIR 150TH ANNIVERSARY. I SEND GREETINGS.  
FOUNDED IN THE EARLIEST DAYS OF CANTON THIS CHURCH HAS  
LONG CONTRIBUTED TO THE GROWTH AND SPIRIT OF ITS COMMUNITY.  
WITH A STRONG TRADITION OF FAITH AND WORK, I AM SURE IT  
WILL CONTINUE TO ADVANCE ITS HIGH PURPOSE. CONGRATULATIONS  
AND BEST WISHES=

DWIGHT D EISENHOWER.

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE



MICHAEL V. DI SALLE  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF OHIO  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
COLUMBUS 15

June 15, 1960

Dr. Karl Koepke  
Pastor, First Reformed Church  
United Church of Christ  
Evangelical and Reformed Church  
901 East Tuscarawas Street  
Canton, Ohio

Dear Doctor Koepke:

On behalf of the people of the State of Ohio, I wish to extend to you and your congregation congratulations as you celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the First Reformed Church in Canton, Ohio.

A wonderful record of service compiled by the Church for the community speaks well of the people who guide it and the people for whom the Church has meant guidance. There can be no finer tribute written or spoken.

Congratulations and good wishes for the future years.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Michael V. Di Salle".

MICHAEL V. DI SALLE  
Governor

MVD:bjc



Since June 25, 1957, forming, with  
Congregational Christian Churches, the  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## Evangelical and Reformed Church

*Office of the President*

REV. JAMES E. WAGNER, D.D., LL.D., Th.D.  
Schaff Building, Room 915, 1505 Race Street, Philadelphia 2, Pennsylvania

January 27, 1960

To the Pastor and Congregation of  
First Church, Canton, Ohio.

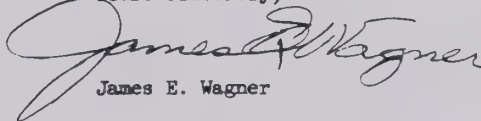
Dear friends:

I regret very much that my very heavy schedule for 1960 makes it impossible for me to be present with you in connection with your celebration of the 150th anniversary of your church. I take this means of greeting you in behalf of the larger fellowship to which you belong.

I also take this opportunity of reminding you and your people that as one of our congregations you are not alone but, as part of the United Church of Christ, belong to a fellowship which now includes not only our 2,742 Evangelical and Reformed congregations but also the approximately 5,500 congregations of the Congregational Christian Churches. In terms of the individuals composing it, this fellowship now includes the approximately 810,000 Evangelical and Reformed people and approximately 1,300,000 in the Congregational Christian constituency. Two implications at least rise out of these simple statistical facts. First, each Sunday when in the Apostles' Creed you repeat the phrases "Holy Catholic (or Universal Christian) Church" and "the communion of saints", let them be a reminder of those other congregations and their individual members who belong to the same now larger fellowship as you do at First Church. Second, remember that these congregations and their members are bound together with yourselves in a program of evangelism and missions and general Christian witness by which together we bear our testimony to the saving power of Jesus Christ.

It is my prayer that this anniversary may be indeed and in truth a milestone indicating that you are still on your way, and that, marking as an anniversary does the completion of an epoch in a church's history, it may also mark the beginning of a new day of faithful and effective work and witness for our Lord Jesus Christ and His kingdom.

Yours sincerely,



James E. Wagner

JEW/rk

### OFFICERS

#### First Vice-President

Rev. John R. C. Haas, D.D.  
314 Market St., Evansville 8, Ind.

#### Second Vice-President

Dr. John W. Mueller, Esq.  
Paul Brown Building, St. Louis, Mo.

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1506 Race St., Philadelphia 2, Pa.

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1728 Chouteau Ave., St. Louis 8, Mo.

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Rev. L. W. Goebel, D.D., LL.D.  
1409 S. Rock Hill Rd.  
Webster Groves 19, Mo.

REV. ROBT. L. HEGNAUER, *V. Pres*  
213 Wood Street, S. E.  
East Canton, Ohio

SOUTHEAST OHIO SYNOD  
EVANGELICAL AND REFORMED CHURCH

MR. JAY L. GOODIN, *Treasurer*  
1715 41st Street, N. W.  
Canton 9, Ohio

REV. CLARENCE C. HUPRICH, *Secretary*  
205 W. Jefferson Street  
Hartsville, Ohio

REV. ARTHUR H. HARSH, *President*  
649 Bellflower Ave., S. W.  
Canton 10, Ohio  
Tel. Glendale 4-7322

MR. RAY DOTTA, *Lay Member*  
Box 82  
Clarington, Ohio

July 13, 1960

To The Pastor and Members of First Evangelical and Reformed Church  
Canton, Ohio

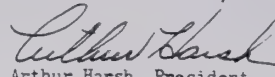
Dear Christian Friends:

On behalf of the Churches and Members of Southeast Ohio Synod and on my own behalf, I wish to extend to each of you and to those friends who celebrate with you congratulations on this the one-hundred fiftieth anniversary of First Church.

May these days be filled with many memories of God's blessings. All of us and especially those of us in the Canton Area are happy that we share in the heritage that has come to us through First Church and its leaders.

We pray that God may continue to use you and your Church for service in His Kingdom and that His richest blessing may continue to be poured upon you.

Yours in His Service,

  
Arthur Harsh, President  
Southeast Ohio Synod

AH/amh

Franz.-ref. Gemeinde  
Frankfurt a. M.

Frankfurt a. M., den 1. August 1960

Herrn  
Pfarrer Dr. Karl Koepke  
901 East Tuscarawas Strret  
CANTON, OHIO

Lieber Bruder Koepke:

In meinem Urlaub erhalte ich eben Ihren Brief nachgesandt und eile mich, ihn rechtzeitig zu beantworten. Haben Sie vielen Dank dass Sie an uns gedacht haben. Wir freuen uns sehr dass wir Ihnen ein Grusswort schicken können.

In unserer Kirche hängt nicht nur ein Gedankblatt, mit dem wir uns immer wieder daran erinnern, wie gross die Hilfe Ihrer Gemeinde in den schweren Jahren und beim Wiederaufbau unserer Kirche war; sondern wir freuen uns sooft wir von Ihnen sprechen und gedenken Ihrer Gemeinde in Dankbarkeit. So schreibe ich mit Freuden folgendes Grusswort:

"Die Französisch-Reformierte Gemeinde in Frankfurt am Main in Deutschland gedenkt in Dankbarkeit für brüderliche Hilfe in schwerer Not und in herzlicher Mitfreude der First Reformed Church in Canton, Ohio, anlässlich deren 150. Gründungstages. Möge unser treuer Gott der First Reformed Church weiterhin seine Gnade schenken, sie zum Werkzeug Jesu Christi ausrüsten und sie etwas sein lassen zu seiner Ehre.

Konsistorium der Französisch-Reformierten Gemeinde in  
Frankfurt am Main:

gez. Dr. G. Bailloul  
Präses-Altester

gez. Dr. D. Stoodt  
Pfarrer.





## THE COUNCIL OF CHURCHES OF CHRIST OF CANTON AND VICINITY

John A. Sessions, President  
Rev. Karl Koepke, Vice President  
Mrs. E. A. McCuskey, Secretary  
C. Calvin Zimmer, Treasurer  
Rev. Richard E. Appel, Exec.-Sec'y  
Greenwood 7-2462

Rooms 401-402  
Y.M.C.A. Building  
405-2nd St., N.W.  
CANTON 2, OHIO  
GLENDAL 4-5021

July 15, 1960

The First Reformed Church  
Canton, Ohio

Dear Christian Friends:

One hundred fifty years within two milleniums of Church history may appear insignificant, but it is long enough to remind us one and all that we are caught up in a Divine Activity that reaches beyond us, both before and behind.

My occasions of worshiping with you in recent years has revealed a Church that is dynamic and a Church with a sense of mission.

A fifteen year acquaintance with your Church and its ministers has revealed a Church that is prophetic and that takes a rightful place in the larger ecumenical fellowship and community.

I congratulate you on your past years and achievements. I pray for you an even more glorious future under the Lordship of our Christ.

As someone has suggested, it is "A Great Time to be Alive", despite the impinging world crises. Never has man been so lost. Never has the Gospel been so needed. Never has the Church had its task more clearly defined for it.

Under the urgency and inspiration of the Holy Spirit may you know your mission anew and may you faithfully perform your labor of love in an efficient contemporary way as Christ's people.

Cordially,

*R. E. Appel*  
R. E. Appel  
Executive Secretary

KOINONIA - - - FELLOWSHIP, PARTNERSHIP - - -

" - - - the churches of our divine Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ  
- - - uniting in their efforts - - - "



EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

CANTON 2, OHIO

July 20, 1960

The Reverend Dr. Karl Koepke  
First Evangelical and Reformed Church  
901 East Tuscarawas Street  
Canton, Ohio

Dear Dr. Koepke:

The Sesquicentennial Anniversary of the First  
Evangelical and Reformed Church offers our community  
the occasion to recognize the early and constant  
source of our religious guidance.

Even before the establishment of Canton as a town,  
the Reformed and Lutheran congregations gave Canton  
its first church edifice, endowing our citizens with  
a great spiritual heritage.

On behalf of the Citizens of Canton, I extend sincerest  
thanks to you for this invaluable contribution to our  
fellow man and to the City of Canton.

Respectfully yours,

*Charles L. Babcock*

CHARLES L. BABCOCK, Mayor  
City of Canton

CLB:AK

■ ■ ■ LET'S BOOST CANTON ■ ■ ■





## THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

THE humble and benevolent spirit existent in the Church has continued into the Sunday School from the days of its early beginning. This can only be attributed to the type of families which helped to organize the original church and the many faithful teachers, officers and members who have served and attended the school. The conscientious work

of the combined classes has made the success of the school an example to stand high in the realm of teaching and training among all congregations.



Charles J. Blair

The exact date of the original founding of the school is not definite, but it is very probable that the Sunday School had its organization about the same time as the congregation. Since Rev. Mahnenschmidt was visiting the Canton charge at regular intervals from 1812 to 1818, it is felt that he certainly would have provided some means of teaching the young people during those intervals. Hence, the year 1812 may be accepted as the one in which the present school had its humble beginning.

At first, the scholars were taught to read and understand enough of the German language in order to study and learn their catechism in the mother tongue. As the scholars improved their ability in reading, the Bible was placed in their hands as the only text book. Gradually more emphasis was placed upon the religious and spiritual aspects of the Sunday School work and was done entirely in German until the close of Reverend Herbruck's pastorate in January 1886. At the beginning of Rev. Rust's pastorate, English services were introduced and English classes were also formed in the school. However, the opening service and the singing were still conducted in German. By 1916 the Sunday School had become an all-English organization with the exception of the German Class which later merged with the Goodwill Class.

The oldest available written record on hand today contains the Constitution of the Sunday School adopted in January 1891. This important set of rules was first written in German and then in English by Bertha Deuble (Mrs. George Currie) who was then Secretary of the School and is now Superintendent of the Cradle Roll Department.



## SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS AND OFFICERS

*Top Row:* Ray Roshong, Edward Hesslink, Mrs. Robert Borden, Mrs. Richard Zahler, Mrs. Samuel Loliger, Miss Emma Hill, Mrs. Melvin Gross, Herbert Deibel, Charles Hill, Charles Blair, Mrs. Harry Bruey, Mrs. William Rank, Miss Ruth Currie, Miss Sandra Hoover, Paul Schneider, Jr., Mrs. Austin Stock, Miss Martha Frutsky.

*Fourth Row:* Mrs. Ted Drechsler, Mrs. Cyril Rispin, Miss Karen Weyand, Mrs. William Parry, Mrs. Robert Yeary, Mrs. Helen Wilt, Mrs. Norman Schemansky, Mrs. Milton Leuthold, Mrs. Sam Ruefly, Miss Margaret Zernechel, Miss Linda Boydela-tour, Mrs. Paul Schneider, Mrs. George Casper, Mrs. Robert Rebillot, Mrs. Don Abbey, Mrs. Lyone Adams, Miss Kathy Adams, Mrs. Joseph Scott.

*Third Row:* Lyone Adams, Robert Blyer, Robert Yeary, John Ulmschneider, William Walker, Jr., Harold Frutsky, Russell Jordy, Edward D. Okey, Bolton Strauch, Dean Lorson, Earl Schibler, Verl Shearer, Ralph Kressly, Paul Schneider, Sr., Don Abbey, Carl Hoover, Sam Ruefly, Miss Mary Jo Taylor.

*Second Row:* Mrs. Arnold Warkall, Miss Helen Riegler, Mrs. Wilbur Garner, Mrs. Walter Vogelsang, Mrs. Matilda Marbot, Mrs. Lester Riegler, Mrs. Harold Frutsky, Harold Weyand, William Rank, Herman Fahrner, Wilbur Billings, Mrs. Harold Weyand, Miss Janice Blyer, Mrs. Ed Ramsey, T. Gail Reigle, Miss Anna Enzmann, James Seccombe, Sr., Miss Karen Boldt.

*First Row:* Dr. Karl Koepke, Mrs. Floyd Perman, Mrs. Charles W. Offenburger, Mrs. Daniel McDonald, Mrs. Ronald Clarke, Mrs. Lucile Huckels, Mrs. Carl Spanagel, Carl Spanagel, Elmer Currie, Mrs. George Currie, Mrs. Roy Mark, Miss Joan Drechsler, Mrs. Carl Snyder, Mrs. Clarence Baab, Clarence Baab, Mrs. Paul Ake, Mrs. James Sherman, Philip Billings, Mrs. Karl Fahrner, Mrs. Thomas Bennett.

The intent and objective of the officers in this earlier history of the school has set the pattern for present procedure and is depicted in the following portion of the original constitution:

"The object of the Sunday School is to instruct the children and youth in the knowledge of God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, our Saviour . . .

"I. The Children must be attentive, respectful to their teachers and the officers of the school and submit to their instruction and regulation.

"II. The teachers obligate themselves to be punctual and regular in the Sunday School and if necessitated to be absent they must endeavor to secure a substitute."

The remaining articles of the Constitution pertain to the election and duties of the Officers which were limited in number as compared with our present Sunday School staff which is listed in the back of this booklet.

As expressed in the foregoing excerpts from the Constitution the early instruction was extended to the children and youth and as a result, the Sunday School was composed of the Primary Class, Intermediate Scholars, Teachers and Officers.

In 1894 the Sunday School enjoyed an enrollment of approximately three hundred with the following officers elected:

President .....	Rev. F. Strassner
Vice-President .....	Charles Seaman
Superintendent—German .....	Alfred Raber
Superintendent—English .....	Phil Weber
Recording Secretary .....	Bertha Deuble



Financial Secretary .....	George Spanagel
Treasurer .....	Adam Thomas
Librarian .....	Dora Strassner
Librarian .....	William Daberko
Organist .....	Alice Eubelhart
Chorister .....	William Strassner

The following continued to serve upon motion by the elected officers:

Primary Department:

Superintendent .....	Mrs. Bachert
Assistant Superintendent .....	Miss Louisa Bauhof
Assistant Superintendent .....	Mr. Schwitzer
Secretary .....	Miss Lena Jacob
Organist .....	Miss Laura Gesswein

In 1894, as in all the years of the History of the Sunday School, many faithful teachers continued to devote their services and the following is a record of the ones of that period:

Miss Debbie Neher	Miss Mary Speck
Miss Leah Neher	Miss Bertha Eicher
Miss Emma Paar	Miss Pearl Strassner
Mrs. Bertha Zuercher	Miss Elnora Graff
Miss Bertha Fuhrman	Mr. Elton Deuble
Miss Gertrude Talbot	Miss Mary Herbruck
Miss Mary Stump	Miss Clara Riniker
Miss Carrie Rubental	Mrs. Phil Weber
Mr. Henry Renfend	Mr. Weimer
Mr. Louis Deuble	Mrs. Flora Heidrich

The attendance in the earlier years of the school indicated the high degree of interest shown in the work and services of the teachers and officers when we recognize the following figures for 1894 and realize that the Sunday School did not include all ages at this time:

Average attendance — 1st Quarter .....	292
Average attendance — 2nd Quarter .....	339
Average attendance — 3rd Quarter .....	268
Average attendance — 4th Quarter .....	309
Average attendance for year 1894 .....	296

This same year was a memorable one and saw many changes in the Constitution of the Sunday School, one of which provided for the establishment of an Adult German Class. This made a tremendous change in the advancement of the School, and not only provided a larger enrollment but necessitated teaching material and methods of a different level than had been previously provided.

The Minister presided over the Sunday School until 1896 when Rev. Nau started his pastorate and decided to be an ex-officio member of the Cabinet of Officers but to assist and cooperate where necessary.

During the early history of the Sunday School it became the custom to elect two Superintendents, one German and one English. In 1896, the English Superintendent became the presiding officer at all meetings of the teachers and officers and in his absence, the German Superintendent would preside. However, the election of the German Superintendent was discontinued in 1905.

During the last three quarters of a century the following Superintendents have served:

German	English
1885-91—Christoph Leonhart	1890-97—Phil Weber
1892-99—Alfred Raber	1898-99—J. F. H. Deibel
1900-01—Fred Schweitzer	1900-01—Howard Dine
1902-04—Alfred Raber	1902-30—William Daberko
	1931-48—Paul G. Schneider
	1949-50—Herbert Deibel
	1951- —Charles Blair

We are mindful of the fact that during the latter part of the 19th century and early part of the 20th century the Sunday School was growing very rapidly. This is attested to by the reference in Rev. Bolliger's History which reads as follows: "Beginning with 1875 the enrollment at the end of each five-year period is given:

1875 — 200	1890 — 300	1905 — 750
1880 — 250	1895 — 475	1910 — 780
1885 — 300	1900 — 420	1915 — 950"

At the turn of the century a member of the congregation in the person of Mr. William (Bill) Daberko had been serving the Sunday School in various capacities and it is only fitting that we devote our attention to his progress and service in the development of the school.

After serving as Librarian in 1894 he was elected to the office of Recording Secretary in 1896 and served in this capacity until 1900. His nature and contagious humor can be depicted in the following minutes gleaned from the records and submitted herewith in full.

October 12, 1899

The meeting conducted by Mr. (John) Deible. Secretary again forgot his report. Treasurer reported a balance in the Treasury of \$97.98. S. S. membership committee reported progress, that they secured a few new members and also that they were making a special effort to get teachers to attend weekly Prayer Meeting. Mr. Deible presented a bill of \$4.50 for 100 leaves of light which was ordered paid. Meeting then wisely adjourned.

William Daberko, Secretary

In 1902 he was elected Superintendent of our Sunday School and served in this capacity until 1931 at which time he was elected to the honorable position of Superintendent Emeritus.

During Mr. Daberko's tenure of office the Sunday School grew and prospered in all Departments. Many assistants were added to the regular elected offices and new Departments were formed.

As the enrollment increased the Junior and Senior Departments were organized. The Cradle Roll Department was formed to recognize and register the infants of the members of the church.

A Chorister was added to lead the singing during the opening and closing periods of Sunday School.

Three and sometimes six ushers were elected to not only greet the members as they entered the doors of the Church, but also to distribute literature and some books. Today the ushers are not elected, but the practice continues on a voluntary basis and many of the men who were once elected may be seen on Sunday mornings serving in the same capacity.



#### SUNDAY SCHOOL CABINET

*Top Row:* Herman Fahrner, Harold Weyand, Wilbur Billings, T. Gail Reigle, Lyone Adams, Sam Ruefly.

*Middle Row:* Mrs. Wilbur Garner, Mrs. Lester Riegler, Mrs. Harold Frutschy, Mrs. Ronald Clarke, Mrs. Harold Weyand, Miss Janice Blyer, Mrs. Charles W. Offenburg, Mrs. Floyd Perman, Mrs. Karl Fahrner.

*Front Row:* Mrs. Arnold Warkall, Mrs. Lucile Huckels, Carl Spanagel, Dr. Karl Koepke, Charles Blair, Mrs. George Currie, Miss Anna Enzmann, Mrs. Carl Snyder, Mrs. Clarence Baab, Clarence Baab.



In August 1914 a decision was made to hold regular monthly meetings of the teachers and officers not only to discuss the business of the Sunday School, but also prepare material for ensuing lessons. This proposal was made by Mr. Henry Deibel who was Assistant Superintendent at this time, and who has contributed so much to the development of the School during his long period of service.

This regular monthly meeting later developed into a meeting of the heads of the various departments which is now called the Cabinet. Luncheons and sometimes dinners were served at these meetings, as is now the custom.

The Home Department was created to provide visitors to call upon the sick and shut-ins and to convey literature and information from the church.

The Office of Membership Secretary was instituted to register all the members of the Sunday School so that a permanent record of the status of enrollment could be maintained in addition to the birthdate of each member.

The Missionary Department was organized to provide personnel to assign certain dates throughout each year for the respective classes to present their Missionary Offering which is used for various phases of mission work, one of the projects being contributions to Foreign Missions. Many will remember the benevolent support made to native evangelists such as Rev. M. C. Tang at Yochow, China.

The Birthday Secretary was added which has the important function of maintaining the birth date of every member of the Sunday School in sequence. On each Birthday Anniversary a letter of Greetings is mailed to the respective member, accompanied by an envelope in which the member has the opportunity to place his Birthday Offering which is added to the Missionary Fund.

An Orchestra was organized which served under the direction of various leaders to provide music for the opening and closing of Sunday School and also for accompaniment for the singing. Today the music is furnished by very competent pianists.

The Athletic Department was organized to provide recreation and supervised competition in various sports for the young people.

With the steady growth of the Sunday School organization, it became necessary in 1926 to add another Assistant Superintendent to the General Staff.

Because of the untiring devotion and leadership exhibited by Mr. Daberko, a special recognition service was included in the program for the Dedication of the Parish House which was held on Sunday, June 12, 1927. We quote in part from this program:

"The Rev. F. C. Nau, was the pastor of our Church who picked this very young man for the position he has held for twenty-five years. A Godly mother and father had done their part in preparing his heart and mind. The congregation has given loyal and hearty response to his leadership. There have been associated with him teachers and other assistants of devotion equal to his. Some of these have also been in service for 25 years and more, and to them are due our gratitude and our congratulations upon this occasion.

The unusual feature of Mr. Daberko's career is, that this school has never tired of him, but to the contrary his leadership is as popular now as at any time, if not more so. Religion to him is a matter of daily living. He has true love for folks, and sympathizes with them in their joys as well as in their sorrows. His humor is refreshing and contagious and has saved many a difficult situation.

We want to continue in the blessed fellowship of Kingdom work, and it is our foremost prayer that Mr. Daberko may lead us into an even more promising future."

Mr. Daberko did continue as Superintendent for three more years and is still an inspiration to all of us.

In 1931, Mr. Paul G. Schneider became Superintendent of the school having served as Assistant Superintendent from 1926 through 1930.

During Mr. Schneider's term in office the Sunday School continued to grow and more Departments and Offices were developed.

The instruction for the children during Church or "second hour" had been a task assigned to the Church School for many years and as the congregation grew and the number of children increased, the task increased.

In order to care for the four to six year old children from the Beginners' Department, a Kindergarten was formed for "second hour."

A Junior Activity Group was formulated for the nine to twelve year old children which today observe Junior Church during "second hour." Much can be said about the value of this phase of instruction and the type of services held. Let it suffice to say that the procedure is patterned after the regular Church Service with our own teachers and leaders as the speakers.

In 1931 the Flower Committee became an official function of the Sunday School. Each Sunday through the year, this committee distributes the flowers from the Church to the sick and shut-ins. Mrs. Clarence Baab was elected Chairman of the Flower Committee at that time and has continued to faithfully serve in the same capacity through the intervening years.

The Young People's Division was emphasized with Supervision over the Senior and Young People's Department in the School and also other related activities of this Division.

Prior to 1947, Sunday School Class instruction had started with the Beginners at four years of age. With the growing desire to reach all ages with a Sunday School lesson, it was decided to start a class from the Cradle Roll and thus the Cradle Roll Class began.

At this time with so many Children's Classes and activities, it became necessary to develop the office of Children's Division Superintendent to provide for leadership and coordination of activities in this Division. This has been a decided factor in organizing Children's Day and Christmas Programs.

Being interested in training in Christian activities, Mr. Schneider organized many classes or seminars for the teachers and officers of the school and in 1947 was appointed Chairman of the Committee on Religious Education. He continued to serve as Superintendent of the Sunday School until 1949, having served in this capacity as a very faithful and capable leader for eighteen years.

In 1949, Mr. Herbert Deibel was elected Superintendent. Mr. Deibel proved to be a very able leader with his efficient manner of handling and organizing all the details of the various functions of the School. This is evidenced by the fact that in his second year in office only four positions out of 54 elective offices were filled with people who had not served in the prior year. And these four offices were replaced due to illness or having moved out of the city.

Fellowship has always been one of the outstanding attributes of the Church and Sunday School which is the reason for holding so many excursions, picnics and festivals throughout the history of the organization. It would seem that each event of this nature was entered into with much enthusiasm as evidenced by the following excerpt gleaned from the record of the business meeting held May 18, 1905:

"The Picnic Committee made its report having decided to hold the picnic at Rock Point on Wednesday, July 19th. The rates to be for Adults, \$1.00 and Children 75 cents. They also engaged a train of 14 coaches and were granted a rebate of 25 cents by the railroad company."

The same enthusiasm was shown in July of this past year when it was decided to hold a picnic at Clearwater Park near Uniontown, Ohio and four hundred members responded.

The lesson materials for many years have been in part the Uniform International series published by our own denominational boards and agencies, supplemented with additional materials published by other publishing houses. The Church and Home Series have also been used for



a period of time in various departments. Teachers have been furnished the individual "helps" they have desired or requested. The annual expense for Sunday School literature has amounted in recent years to almost \$1500 which is paid out of the general fund of the school.

#### 1951 - 1960

In January of 1951, Charles J. Blair, a member of the Wel-Come-In Class was elected General Superintendent. In every avenue of progress and area of activity he has led the school forward to new heights of service and devotion. His able, congenial and sincere and consecrated leadership have made these years a continued, on-going march. He has often requested a concerted effort on the part of the entire Sunday School and the members have always been zealous to follow.

Space here permits mention of only a few of the fine achievements of these last ten years:

The Children's Classes have continued to grow and in 1953 it became necessary to create a Nursery Department for children three to



#### 1960 CONFIRMATION CLASS

*Top Row:* Robert Milner, Terry Miller, James Geiger, James Beck.  
*Third Row:* Douglas Rebillot, Phillip Hornbeck, Randall Haas, Tom Wenning, James Cooper, Edward Miller, Earl Rodd, Clarence Buhecker, Tim Borden, Robert Hawkins.  
*Second Row:* David Graber, Robert Ploch, Jane Warkall, Claudia Shriver, Marsha Laschinske, Linda Steffen, Carole Cartwright, Ann Bollinger, Nancy Gehring, Linda Ruefly, Gregory Maurer, Dr. Karl Koepke.  
*Front Row:* Irene Braucher, Patricia Wefler, Anita Stark, Paula Claus, Judith Price, Janet Risher, Kathy Faulk, Linda Price, Marie Zenk, Nancy Huberty, Cecelia Hohler, Nancy Strauch.

four years of age, leaving the Cradle Roll Class to instruct and care for the children up to three years old.

In 1956, it was decided to again reduce the crowded condition in the Cradle Roll Class and create an Infants' Department for ages up to two years.

Each of these additions has involved a problem with regard to space but this is nothing new at First Church because we can go back to November 1923 and read in the minutes that it was "decided to have the Primary Department give a corner of the basement room (now the Men's Class) for the Beginners' Department."

The Vacation Church School sessions have continued to be a successful project of the School. This school is maintained by our School in cooperation with the First Lutheran and Grace Evangelical United Brethren Schools. In recent years the sessions have been held alternately in First Reformed and First Lutheran Church buildings. Planning for these schools always begins in February.

New classes have been organized as the need has arisen, witness such classes as the Join-Ups and Co-Ed Classes in the Senior and Youth Departments.

Another change worthy of note has been the gradual change in missionary offering designations. Whereas, as previously stated, funds were designated for one cause for a number of years, the emphasis is now rather on an annual basis. Such emphases as financial or capital fund drives by denomination institutions or denominational or synodical boards or agencies have been supported. In this list we could include Market Heights Mission, two drives by the Home for the Aged at Upper Sandusky, two one-year drives for the new and splendid Temple Hills Camp near Bellville, Ohio, Campus Ministries, and the United Seminary appeals of 1960 and 1961.

Summer schedules have also been studied and changed as times and circumstances have dictated, with the result that a full twelve month program of study has been maintained.

We believe statistics are always fascinating reading if they are studied and if they are correct. In the case of attendance records in First Church Sunday School, the records are correct and we believe interesting. Each Sunday's attendance is recorded in that week's issue of The Helper. At the end of the year the average attendance is computed.

The record for the years 1951 through 1959 and including 1960 average to September 1st is revealing. Each year, with the exception of 1959, has shown an increase. This one exception will apparently remain a lone one, for the uncompleted 1960 record on September 1st was already points ahead of 1959.

Here is the gradual and steady climb in the yearly average attendance:

1951 — 571	1956 — 660
1952 — 584	1957 — 668
1953 — 588	1958 — 672
1954 — 626	1959 — 669
1955 — 627	1960 (to September 1st) — 678

The average increase, as shown in 1960 over 1951 is 107 per Sunday.

One fine and traditional event each year on Promotion Sunday is the presentation of Bibles, by the Sunday School, to boys and girls being promoted from the Primary to the Junior Department. This presentation takes place during a well-planned and presented program in the Primary Department with parents of the children in attendance. The act of presentation is made either by the general superintendent or the pastor.

It is noteworthy in this reference to record that the particular format and copy of the Bible presented has been the same for some twenty years or more. Children now receiving Bibles are receiving the same copy their parents received when they were being promoted. It happens this is a volume published in England.

There is an intent and purpose in this procedure. When these boys and girls enter the Confirmation Class some years later, they all have the same volume which makes for easier and handier reference procedure.

During recent years a faithful member, who desires to remain anonymous, has provided these copies of the Scriptures for the children. The great good and the end results of such sincerity and goodwill are, of course, known only to God, but we feel confident that many members, who reading The Book, render thanks to God for the gift of the Word of Life.

So then, as now, changes had to be made as the Sunday School continues to grow. The situation is never static and therefore the development of space and environment continues to be a major factor demanding flexibility as does also the treatment of methods and practices in functions of teachers and officers.

While it may be impossible to register on paper or chart, on a graph, or even describe in words, there is, we are sure, a certain "atmosphere" in which the life and progress of the Sunday School has been nurtured. Just what elements in union with each other have generated this atmosphere may be difficult to say. But it does exist with most salutatory results. And we hasten to say, this has spilled over into our worship services and congregational life. We believe and are convinced that here in First Church there is a reciprocity of action and life between Sunday School and Congregation that may be considered one of First Church's secrets of vigor and progress through the years. Let us say humbly and



gratefully that these things must be because here the spirit of God has been at work in hearts and minds of persons who have gladly yielded to divine urging and guidance.

It can be said that one contributing factor which has generated this atmosphere of friendliness, openness of mind and spirit, religious fellowship and eagerness to serve some cause of the Sunday School or Church, has been the system of "organized" classes. This "organization" is seen in nearly all classes above the Intermediate Department of the Sunday School. Classes have regularly elected officers and hold regular monthly social and business meetings. Some classes meet in our well-appointed Parish House social rooms, others meet in the homes of members. All classes hold summer outings or picnics in our city parks. It is in these meetings where the spirit of acquaintance, friendship, camaraderie, kindredness, and unity of purpose has been developed. Some of these classes are of recent organization, as stated above, while others have a history of purpose and service that goes back for decades. The membership of these classes has changed but the spirit has remained the same.

During the course of the years some of the projects of these classes have, of course, been financial. Funds have been raised through sales, drives and dinners. These have all served their purpose and time very well. However, in recent years though large contributions are still made, the sales and dinner-serving aspect of these classes' life has receded somewhat into the background. Only two or three congregation-wide dinners are served annually, and the emphasis is as much on the sociability afforded by the function as on the financial assets which accrue.

We cannot bring this section of the historical account to a close without expressing our deepest appreciation to Mr. Blair and his faithful corps of leaders and teachers, and recognize also the loyal and interested devotion and response on the part of the members of the school.

In the life of a Sunday School such as this there are events great and small. They sometimes stand close together and we close to them. We trust we have the ability to evaluate those that are significant, and to see those which may not be altogether so, in their true light and focus.

In the case of the Sunday School and her work, we do want to recognize how great and invaluable are all her ways and hopes, and though they stand so close to us, we do want to recognize this tremendous fact, that each Sunday our feet are standing on holy ground and our hearts burn within us as our consecrated leaders and teachers impart unto us the Word of Life.

With a great heritage to accept, and confronted with great tasks to do, we go forward in Christ's name to make His Kingdom an ever greater reality in our, and our children's lives.

We ask our readers to join us faithfully in this crusade.



## THE SINGING, THE ORGAN, AND THE CHOIR

The congregational singing during the first thirty years would be judged as very crude from the modern standpoint, for there were neither songbooks nor musical instruments. The early members had come from various parts of Germany and Switzerland, as well as from various eastern states. Though a German hymnal was apt to be a part of the family possessions, the chances were that hardly two would be alike. Under such conditions the only solution of the difficulty was for the minister to first read the stanzas to be sung, and then read them again line by line, waiting between lines for the congregation to sing them.

About 1840, a union hym book for Reformed and Lutheran congregations was introduced, and three years later a five register organ was bought. Its use so stimulated the desire for better singing that the first choir was organized. About 1850, George Deuble became the director of the choir and organist, and remained in this position until 1886. The first organ served for thirteen years, and then was displaced by a fine new instrument which had thirteen registers. Rev. Herbruck was enthusiastic in his description of the new organ. "It is put up in elegant style, has a beautiful sound and its internal construction is so convenient." It was dedicated on Sunday, July 13, 1856. When the Reformed congregation separated from the Lutheran in 1862, the right of the Reformed people in this second organ had to be surrendered to the Lutherans.

A third organ was purchased for the new church and installed in the exact middle of the gallery. During Rev. Rust's pastorate, the organ was removed from the gallery and placed in the front of the auditorium, into the addition which had been built for the purpose. In 1896, shortly after the coming of Rev. Nau, a motor was installed. The old familiar handle that had worked the bellows for thirty-five years thus entered into its well-deserved rest. Eight years later, the congregation purchased a new and modern pipe organ. This eminently satisfactory instrument is still in use. It was dedicated on January 28, 1906.

From the time of its organization down to the present, the choir has been one of the most pleasing and efficient aids to the worship through song. Though during the years, it passed through numerous ups and downs, and changes of personnel, the congregation has never lacked a group of willing singers sacrificing time and giving their talent to aid the public worship.

It would be difficult for members of the choir to enjoy the service they render to the church, were it not for the enthusiastic leadership of the choir director. Mrs. Hilda Ernst, who served in this capacity for eighteen years, was unusually gifted in talent, enthusiasm, and devotion. During her time of service she built up a fine music library. Many a successful and well-attended concert was given, and her beautiful contralto voice still rings in the memory of our members.



It was during these years that the Christmas Eve musical service by the choir was introduced and has been observed annually since that time. This is a highlight looked forward to by congregation and choir alike, and the crowded church of appreciative worshippers attests to the benefits derived in uplifting our spirits for the coming of the Christchild into our hearts each Christmas Season.

The younger boys and girls have also been called upon to serve in song. The Junior Choir affords a welcome change. For several years this group leads the congregation and offers special music on one Sunday of each month under the direction of the choir director.

It is seldom that a choir member is able to serve for fifty years. The late Henry Boldt, who was gifted with a strong tenor voice, sang in



#### THE JUNIOR CHOIR

Top Row: Paula Claus, Janet Risber, Nancy Seeding, Cecelia Horler, Cynthia Crowther, Linda Steffen, Glennys Jean Walters, Paula Winslow, Carole Cartwright, Arleta Miller, James Beck, James Geiger, Edward Miller

Third Row: Irene Braucher, Peggy Frutson, Sheridan Shearer, Linda Prye, Patricia Weller, Lois Lind, Linda Rueff, Jane Wardell, Nancy Strawn, Virginia Urman, Claudia Shriver, Tom Wemming, Dennis Berry, Randall Heas, Larry Horner

Second Row: Donald Hesslink, Patrick Morgan, Sharon Rostong, Brenda Rose, Bern Cartwright, Kathleen Koepke, Susan Ramsey, Diane Stearns, Bruce Winslow, David Gaiser, Robert Ploch, Lynn Miller

Front Row: James Frutson, Tim Stauffer, Ranya Mark, Barbara Larson, Susan Frutson, Mrs. Neilson Pickering, Mrs. Leslie Hanson, James Weyant, Vivian May, Sandra Kline, Ann Bollinger, Sandra Oyster

the choir for half a century. He was honored by his fellow choir members for his faithfulness and his fine contribution to the music of the church.

Over the years, hymn books and many beautiful anthems have been donated to the church to honor the memory of loved ones who have been called to the Church Triumphant. What a worthy tribute and memorial!

The list of organists who have served is as follows: George Deuble, 1850-1886; L. A. Clewell, 1886-1898, H. J. Ballard, 1898-1914. These men also served as choir directors. Ervin L. Leslie, 1914-1916; H. J. Ballard returned for nine months; Mrs. Austin Stock, 1917-1958; Mrs. Neilson Pickering, 1959-...

The choir directors are as follows: T. Dillwyn Thomas, 1914-1915; Audrey W. Barlow, 1915-1916; J. S. Stoner, 1916-1917. There was no director during Mrs. Stock's first year as organist. Ray Clewell, 1918-1922; Mrs. Henry Ernst, 1923-1941; Mrs. Lyda Austin, 1941-1945; Mrs. Leslie Hanson, October 1945.





## THE LADIES' AID SOCIETY

The Ladies' Aid Society has been in continuous operation since 1879. It had, however, two predecessors, which, during the years that the church was being built, had rendered most valuable service. These earlier organizations, "The Woman's Society" and "The Maidens' Society" busily sewed, served suppers, and collected by personal solicitation, in order to secure funds for part of the interior furnishing of the church. When the church was all paid for, the organizations disbanded.

After an interval of about fourteen years, the need of a woman's aid society became insistent again, and hence, in 1879, a new organization was effected. The minutes of the first meeting, recorded in the handwriting of Rev. Peter Herbruck, read as follows: "The Woman's Society of the Reformed Jerusalem's Congregation of Canton, Ohio, was organized February 19, 1879. Mrs. Lydia Hexamer was elected as chairman, and Mrs. Susanna Deuble as treasurer. The society will meet once every two weeks. Each member will pay, if possible ten cents at each meeting. The monies are to be expended for home and foreign missions and other benevolent purposes."

The women united with the new organization with gladness, and within a year, forty-six members were enrolled. The organization of the society during the days of Rev. Herbruck's pastorate was unique. The officers elected merely had the honor of the position; for the pastor presided at the meetings, recorded the minutes, took charge of the money, disbursed it according to his best judgment, and simply reported his actions to the society.

The members worked with remarkable faithfulness to secure funds. In addition to the regular monthly dues of twenty cents, the women secured considerable amounts from sewing, suppers, bazaars, special offerings and gifts.

The society was active in giving much necessary help to the congregation. Thus we find it helping to build and paint the parsonage, pay the taxes, sewer assessments, street-paving, repair the organ, fix up the furnace, paint the church, remodel the church, pay part of the janitor's salary, etc.

The Ladies' Aid Society at the period of its greatest prosperity numbered 140 members. Since all the meetings of the society were conducted entirely in German, it was impossible for years to secure new members except at long intervals. In this organization, as well as in the church, the transition from the German language to the English was difficult. It was not until 1945 that a beginning was made. Devotional services were in both German and English for a time. Since the remaining members could understand the English as well as the German, the decision to use English entirely, was made. At this time, the membership was 66. As nearly all the members were advanced in years, deaths have been

frequent. Records show that since 1945 there have been fifty-five deaths. If the change to English had not been made, the society would have died out. However, new, and younger members have kept the work going, and the present membership is 88.

Available records show that the elected officers served very efficiently and for long periods of time. Since the turn of the century there have been but three presidents, Mrs. Flora Heidrich, who served approximately thirty years; Mrs. Katherine Rich approximately fifteen years, and Mrs. Margaret Lyle the last fifteen years. Mrs. Bertha Zuercher served as secretary from 1897 to 1948. Mrs. Wilhelmina Hartung served in the capacity of treasurer from January 1900 to 1947.

While the efforts of the Ladies' Aid Society were devoted mainly to ways and means of increasing the treasury in order to be helpful to the church in every way possible, and for social purposes, a deviation has taken place in the last fifteen years. The emphasis now is to inject into the monthly meetings a program of devotions, and material of interest to members of a spiritual and educational nature. Each year, in February, a special anniversary program takes place to which guests are invited. This has proved to be a highlight during the year.

The members of the society are aware of the rich heritage bestowed upon them through the labor and love for the church of the great souls who have passed on. They are supreme examples of devout and loyal workers. The need is for members to follow in their footsteps.

The object of the society is to take courage and continue to carry on the work, and to perpetuate a Christian fellowship, love and compassion one for another. To this end, between six and seven hundred visits are made to sick and shut-in members each year.

Thirty-two years ago, a Penny Club was organized. This group consists of members who wish to contribute one penny a day (\$3.65 a year) toward the society treasury. This group numbers around thirty.

All together the record of the society is one to be proud of; and the good work continues through the years.

## THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATIONS

The first Young People's Society of the German Reformed Church existing before June 1, 1890 was known as "The Willing Workers," whose primary concern was to aid the church by giving financial assistance. Recognizing the need for a broader program with emphasis on the spiritual as well as the material, only six months after his installation, January 1, 1890, the Reverend Dr. Frederick Strassner organized a Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor. At this time there was no national youth organization in the Reformed Church through which the youth work was supervised, so the program of the Christian Endeavor Movement (founded in 1881 by Francis Edward Clark, American Congregational Minister) was adopted. This was one of the earliest societies in the Reformed Church in Ohio, and Dr. Strassner became the first president. Four years later a Junior Society was also organized.

The record of these two societies has been one of fluctuating activity and strength, but the effective training through them remains a notable contribution to the church. The membership of the senior society in the days of its greatest popularity was over a hundred. With the organized Sunday School classes becoming active, the Christian Endeavor Society found it increasingly difficult to maintain a large membership. By 1931 changes in the residential areas of Canton naturally contributed to the relocation of many church families, and transportation to evening meetings became increasingly difficult for many young people. However, as long as the evening services of the church continued, it was still possible to follow the Christian Endeavor program, particularly in activities sponsored by the city and county organizations.

The year 1934 marked the merger of the Evangelical Synod of North America and the Reformed Church in the United States. For thirty years the Evangelical Synod had a well-defined national youth organization called, "The Evangelical League," while in the Reformed Church, only the Synod of the Northwest had its own youth organization called, "The Heidelberg League." As part of the Merger, a committee to study young people's work was organized. In 1936, Fred D. Wentzel was appointed the first full-time director of the youth work in the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Many other meetings followed, each aiming to provide a stronger program and better leadership for young people. By 1940 the Youth Fellowship of the Evangelical and Reformed Church united all the Young People of the denomination.

The Youth Fellowship of the local church now for the first time had direct access to program materials purposefully planned under denominational direction. Furthermore, opportunities for youth leaders to participate in projects of international and national dimension were opened. The World Conference on Christian Youth held at Amsterdam, the Purdue Conference at LaFayette, Indiana, and the Third National Conference on Christian Education at Lakeside, Ohio were of this nature.



The latter two were attended by several members of our local church. By 1946 the denomination also had a director of student work and a director of camps and conferences.

Now that a denominational youth organization had been established, our local pastor and young people's worker renewed their efforts to enlist young people to participate in at least some of the project set forth. In June 1947, the youth banquet was attended by one hundred forty young people, The Reverend R. Wobus of Sidney, Ohio having been the speaker. On September 2, 1949 the Canton District Youth Fellowship of the E & R Church held its tenth Annual Retreat at Camp Inawendewin, having fourteen delegates attending. On November 24, 1950, one hundred sixty young people attended the Thanksgiving Fiesta Dinner at which Dr. Robert E. Slaughter from Cleveland, Ohio was the featured speaker.

Camps for young people, with programs designed to develop Christian leadership and provide worship experiences have been consistently supported by our church and Sunday School for many years, sending interested young people and financing the major portion of the expenses. Among camps and conferences attended have been Lakeside, Camp Zion, Camp Mench Mills, Camp Wanake, Dunkirk, the Purdue Conference, and in more recent years Tempel Hills near Bellville, Ohio, established and supported by the four Synods of Ohio. In the summer of 1959 thirty-two young people attended this beautiful camp in Central Ohio and in the summer of 1960 thirty-nine had registered to attend.

The Annual Stewardship Essay and Poster Contest has for many years served to inspire our young people to express in writing and art the value and meaning of stewardship, and in several instances received denominational awards. The Prince of Peace Contest, sponsored annually by the Ohio Council of Churches, has also given many the incentive to present peace declamations to large audiences in our church and others. In one competition one of our young people won the state award. A tradition appreciated by young and old is the annual event of singing Christmas carols to the shut-ins and aged.

Growth in Christian living, inspired by the mountain-top experiences provided by men and women dedicated to the task of bringing Christ into the hearts of the leaders of tomorrow is evidenced in our homes, the Sunday School and Church. Enthusiastic reports on camp experiences brought to us on Labor Day Sunday, expressions of renewed devotion to the church and acceptance of tasks are the fruits of the training received.

Miss Mary Jo Taylor is at the present our able leader in charge of Youth Activities.

## THE WOMAN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETIES

The organization of the Woman's Missionary Society sprang from the need of an English speaking society which could assist in missionary and congregational activities.

The Consistory gladly sanctioned the plan on February 7, 1902 in the following resolution, "A motion prevailed that the consistory recommend a new organization called 'Ladies' Missionary Society' or some other appropriate name." During the following months the women interested met together and by the beginning of 1903 they were ready to organize. Rev. F. C. Nau acted as temporary chairman and explained the work and organization of a missionary society. The first officers elected were Mrs. Clara Weiss, president; Mrs. Eva Thomas, secretary; Mrs. Katherine Thom, treasurer.

In this Sesqui-Centennial year, we pay tribute to the first president, Mrs. Weiss, who on June 19, 1960 celebrated her 94th birthday anniversary, and died on September 30, 1960. She was the widow of the Reverend Louis Weiss who formerly served as the pastor of the Evangelical and Reformed Church at Bellaire, Ohio.

During the first five and one-half years, the organization operated simply as a congregational society, distributing its gifts from time to time according to its preference. Home and Foreign Missionary projects received about half of the total income; the remainder was given to various congregational needs.

At the February meeting 1905, the society entered upon a new phase of work which is thus introduced in the minutes, "Motion was made and carried that a sewing-circle be organized to make articles for which ready sale might be found." An invitation was extended to the ladies of the entire church to assist. Many responded, and this circle has continued without interruption until now. At the present time the Sewing Circle confines itself entirely to quilting, and work is brought to it from all parts of Canton.

A new era dawned for the missionary work when the society determined to labor for the organization of a Woman's Missionary Society of St. John's Classis.

Rev. Theodore P. Bolliger, pastor of the church, overtured St. John's Classis of Central Synod for permission to organize a Classical Woman's Society, and also to appoint a committee to carry the project to completion. Rev. Bolliger was made chairman of the committee. Delegates from seven societies met in First Church, effected a permanent organization, and started to do systematic missionary work.

From the beginning, each meeting was planned to give some definite missionary information and inspiration. The textbooks as used by the missionary societies throughout the country, have been studied by the members, and form a basis for the monthly programs.

The 50th Anniversary of the Woman's Missionary Society was observed with a dinner meeting, June 3, 1953. "A Little Walk Down Memory Lane" introduced each president's term of office and some of the outstanding achievements.

Two auxiliary societies were called into existence on April 5, 1916. The "Business Girls" of the congregation were practically barred from the Woman's Missionary Society by the fact that all the meetings were held in the afternoon. The same evening, the younger girls were organized into the Emma Ziemer Girls' Missionary Guild, so named for Miss Sarah Emma Ziemer, principal of the Girls' School, Yochow City, China. She was the first missionary of the Reformed Church to die on the mission field in active service. Her death was caused by drowning in Tung Ting Lake, near Yochow City, China, December 23, 1913. Mrs. John Whaler was a very able advisor to this group. The object of these groups is to aid in the advancement of Christian Missions in Home and Foreign Lands and further the work of the local church in all its departments.

The 25th Anniversary of these two groups was observed with an evening program at which time the founders, Mrs. T. P. Bolliger of Madison, Wisconsin, and Mrs. B. F. Andrews of Akron, Ohio, were present as guest speakers.

Sponsored by the Woman's Missionary Society, Mrs. David Binns and Mrs. Albert Trachsel organized the young children into a Mission Band in April 1918, and through the years provided opportunity for more missionary education among the children. Now there is a broader way. With the merger of the Evangelical and Reformed Church (1934), all the children's work in the church has come under the direction of the Children's Division of the Board of Christian Education. Thus, the work of the Mission Band becomes a part of the Sunday School program.

The Louise Bolliger Girls' Missionary Guild was called into being to meet the needs of the older girls of the Mission Band, on May 6, 1925. This group was named after Louise V. Bolliger, who, while serving as a missionary teacher at Miyagi Girls' School at Sendai, Japan, died in service. This Society continued until after the merger of the Evangelical Women's Union and the Woman's Missionary Society of General Synod in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1939, at which time the Women's Guild was instituted and became the official women's organization of the Evangelical and Reformed Church. In 1945 the Girls' Missionary Guild as a department was deleted from the Women's Guild program and the membership of the Louise Bolliger Guild transferred to the Women's Guild.

Complete harmony has existed through the years, as together many programs and projects were presented jointly. Support to General Synod was through the budget as well as the Thank Offering Box—"a prayer and a gift each day"—through which many churches, schools and hospitals were built. The ingathering service in November, when the



members attended in a body and each went forward to place her box on the altar, usually had as a guest speaker, a returned missionary. For six years, fifty dollars a year was paid in support of a student in the Winnebago Indian School, but later, when a building fund was established in our local church, this support was discontinued and these funds were applied locally. Much entertainment was presented through musical programs, plays and pageants. The church was the center of the social life of the day. In 1918, the women of Ohio Synodical launched the Missionary Home project in which our women had a part. For eleven years a love gift of thirty cents a year was given by each member. As a result, a two-family house was built and furnished in Tiffin, Ohio, for returned missionaries home on furlough.

Special interest was centered in Miyagi High School and College in Sendai, Japan, through the teaching of three daughters of former pastors; Miss Aurelia Bolliger taught English 1922-1930; Miss Louise V. Bolliger, English and music 1924. She became ill with pneumonia and died February 19, 1925; Miss Catherine L. Nau taught English and music with special responsibility for Student Y.W.C.A. 1921-1924.

Through the patient leadership of our pastors and wives, sincerely dedicated to the cause of missions in our church, our Woman's Missionary Society prospered and grew into five groups, meeting the needs of all in our church. Our women not only served in the local church, but many were active on the boards of the Classical and Synodical Women's Boards.

As is well known, the Reformed Church in the United States and the Evangelical Synod of North America merged in Zion Evangelical Church, Cleveland, Ohio, June 24, 1934. On June 23, 1934, a joint session of the two women's organizations was held. The work of their organizations was presented, policies, publications, and future relations discussed. A Commission on Merger, as well as other necessary committees began their work, and thus, for five years, the women of the Merged Church were getting acquainted.

The Merger Convention of the Women's Organizations of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, instituting "The Women's Guild" as the official women's organization of the church, met in Cleveland, Ohio, November 1, 2, 3, 1939. In recognition of the work of the women Dr. Louis W. Goebel, President of the Church, expressed the hope, "That throughout its history the program of the Women's Guild in all its phases, shall be nothing less than an exaltation of the Cross of Christ, our Lord, that is our prayer. Thus will its membership be found faithful in its stewardship of labor with God." The following sessions consisted of the presentation of the suggested setup of the Women's Guild, namely the Synodical and Regional, with plans for the Guilds in the local churches.

Once more, the birth of a new organization took place in First Church — Canton Regional Women's Guild — on May 13, 1941. This

group is directly responsible for the leadership in the local Women's Guilds. A number of our women have been elected to serve on this Board.

The First General Meeting of the Women's Guild convened in Louisville, Kentucky, November 5, 6, 7, 1941 at which time the Constitution was adopted.

At a fall dinner meeting, October 7, 1942, all the women of the church as well as the formerly organized Woman's Missionary groups were invited to formulate the now official organization of the church, The Women's Guild. Two plans of organization were offered by the National Women's Guild:

(a) That the female membership of the church be divided into circles.

(b) That the existing organized groups be federated and a corps of officers be elected to promote the work of the Women's Guild.

We chose the "b" plan with the presidents of all existing missionary groups and the Ladies' Aid to be represented on the Board. The first officers to serve were: Mrs. R. W. Blemker, president; Mrs. H. M. Dine, first vice president; Mrs. Flora C. Heidrich, second vice president; Mrs. Carl Snyder, secretary; Mrs. Samuel Bachtel, treasurer.

A ceremony preceding the signing of the charter, challenged each woman present "That we may step forward with the women of our denomination in the union of purpose and of action in our great church." Each woman present, came forward and signed with either a blue or gold quill pen, the colors of our Women's Guild. These same pens were used by delegates of our church as they signed the charter of the Women's Guild at its First General Meeting in Louisville, Kentucky, November 1941. The ceremony closed with this historic benediction by the pastor after one hundred forty-five women pledged their intent:

"Thus ends an historic action in the life of First Evangelical and Reformed Church, Canton, the charter enrollment of The Women's Guild. May God's blessing rest upon the work of this hour and bring it to glorious fruition."

An interesting feature was the presentation by Mrs. Paul Schneider of a gavel made of mahogany with birch inset and black walnut finish in memory of her mother. The gavel was made by her father, Mr. Henry Stipes. We trust this gavel will be symbolic to us of unity in our responsibilities.

The purpose of the Women's Guild is that every woman in the church be well informed in the work of the church. This is accomplished through the monthly study programs prepared by the Women's Guild through its six departments: Christian Education, Spiritual Life, Stewardship, Missionary, Christian Service, and Social Action. The reading course

creates the habit of good reading as well as the use of the United Church Herald. The Tiffin Summer Conference presents the study of the Missionary Study books as well as the program material for the coming year. Many of our members are in attendance each year and return to present better planned programs for our women. The monthly Golden Deed usually is a personal service to someone. Visitation of the sick and shut-ins, Altar flowers for Palm Sunday and Easter, as well as the Spring and Fall inspirational meetings are services to the local church. Special days are observed, such as the World Day of Prayer, the first Friday in Lent, which is international; the Lenten Quiet Hour service held annually in our Chapel the first day of Lent, with the offering going to our pastor for welfare work in our church; and the annual Thank Offering service in November.

The Annual Mother-Daughter Banquet held in May for all women of the Church, is climaxed with a fine program. Special recognition is given to the oldest and youngest mother in attendance. Large attendance is evidence of this worthwhile activity. Goodwill is enjoyed by the men of the church in serving the dinner. The women reciprocate by serving the Annual Father-Son Banquet held in February each year.

Once again we had growing pains. On November 28, 1945, twelve young women met in the home of Mrs. Harry E. Bruey to organize a new circle. Officers were elected and installed in a candlelight service by Mrs. Pierce Effinger, then president of the Women's Guild. At the March 19, 1946 meeting, the name of Flora C. Heidrich Circle was adopted.

Again in 1957 came the request for a circle for younger women. On February 8, 1958, the Guild president, Mrs. William Winslow met with an interested group in the home of Mrs. Horace Reehl Jr., and the Ever-Faithful Circle was organized with eleven members. This being a group of very young mothers, their first local project was to improve the facilities in the Infants' Department with a supply of new toys.

At a special service on Sunday, March 3, 1940, Miss Emma Pretorius was made a Commissioned Worker of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, dedicated to service in the church. After seven years as secretary in our church, Miss Pretorius accepted a full-time position as assistant to the treasurer of The Women's Guild with offices in Cleveland, Ohio.

While a member of First Church, Miss Margaret Blemker went to Turkey as an associate missionary for a term of three years (October 1945 through June 1948), to teach English at the American Collegiate Institute, Izmir, Turkey. Miss Blemker, L.H.D. now serves as associate secretary on the Board of International Missions of the United Church of Christ (since June 25, 1957, the merger date of the Evangelical and Reformed and Congregational Christian Churches).



This, then, is a picture of our women's work in the past. It is well to remember the past, but not to live in it. The purpose of The Women's Guild expresses our task in concrete terms:

To unite all the women of the Church in Christian fellowship;  
To deepen spiritual life,  
Stimulate sacrificial giving and promote Christian service in  
The Home, The Local Church, The Denomination,  
The Community, The Nation and the World.

## PAST — PRESENT — FUTURE . . .

SAMUEL H. MILLER in his book "The Life of the Church" relates how it was the habit of the founder of a certain order of monks when he went to chapel to stand at the door and wait in silence, his hand upon the door knob, before he opened it and entered in. The other monks never asked him why he did so, but they all surmised that it must be in the manner of a preparation of self before entering in the presence of the Everlasting God.

You, who have read thus far, will, we are sure, have gained a new and a deeper appreciation of that part of God's Kingdom on earth which we affectionately know as First Evangelical and Reformed Church of Canton, Ohio.

The Church of Jesus Christ! What a concept that! What a fact and power! She is not something to be lightly esteemed, but reverently used, joyfully embraced and exultingly praised.

This is the past greatness of First Church — and in the same paths lie her future strength and life. That through one hundred and fifty years men of flesh and blood should kneel and speak to their Invisible but ever Present Lord, and that through those years they should celebrate the wonder of His love in song and liturgy — this is an extraordinary thing. Here through a century and a half men have stood, with their children and children's children in the presence of life itself. "This is life eternal that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." For one hundred and fifty years men have stood here with faces transfixed, with eyes spheres of expectancy, with deepest faith, and have given utterance to the deepest within the human heart and have said, "O God, Thou art Our God."

In this Sesqui-Centennial year we cannot cross the threshold of her courts in any other spirit than that monk crossed the threshold of his chapel. We remember those whose names have become immortal; we remember pastors and forebears. They stood here seeking God; they are now a silent company, yet they speak. And we today stand where they stood, seeking God. We too come to the Sanctuary and stand before the Eternal. As they did, so do we seek for and desire God to enter into the making of our lives.

We too hunger for peace, for the Benediction of the Eternal God. And we too discover we have peace nowhere but in the Presence of God, nowhere but out of this deep center where man becomes aware that he is a child of God. We realize that life is greater than the mere sum of food, clothing and shelter or the mere necessities of a comfortable living.

The future of the Church, where and what is it? If the miracle which is the Church, is to be fact and experience in our lives, we shall continue to cross the Church's threshold seeking her courts.

We shall come constantly, repeatedly. We shall come each time another week of life begins; we shall begin our weeks in her courts. We shall come as individuals, as husbands and wives, as parents, bringing our children, inviting our friends. We shall continue to come as long as physical powers serve us.

And as we come we shall ever be mindful that here it is true, "We have entered into the labors of other men's hands." We shall be confronted by and be aware of the work of Jesus Christ our Lord: "While we were yet sinners Christ died for us."

A great heritage both in spiritual life and exercises and in physical plant have been handed to us as we observe this Sesqui-Centennial year. We open our hands and hearts to receive them — however, not to clasp them as our own to keep, but to pass them on through our hands and lives to the generation following, which is already here!

We trust that your reading of this historical sketch has been an exciting experience. Those of us who have worked on this booklet feel that not the half has been told. But we have sought to give a correct and vivid picture of how the Spirit of God has worked among us as a congregation for one hundred and fifty years. And we believe that one hundred fifty years are many enough to teach us to seek out "The landmarks that our fathers have set," and also to, "Walk in their ways."

We trust also that your reading of this volume will have aroused within you a prayer, something like that written by Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick:

God of grace and God of glory, On Thy people pour Thy power;  
Crown Thine ancient Church's story; Bring her bud to glorious  
flower.

Grant us wisdom, Grant us courage, For the facing of this hour.

Set our feet on lofty places; Gird our lives that they may be  
Armored with all Christ-like graces in the fight to set men free.  
Grant us wisdom, Grant us courage, That we fail not men nor Thee.

Amen.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

NO person ever writes a book alone; always is the written page the crystalization of one's own thoughts and the knowledge gained in association with others and the expression of their thoughts.

We acknowledge with profound gratitude the service of Mrs. Chester A. Lyle, who not only compiled the major portion of this book, but also served as secretary of the History Committee. She was aided in her work by the writings of two former pastors of First Church. Dr. T. P. Bolliger's book "The History of First Reformed Church of Canton, Ohio" published in 1916 was the source of material concerning the early days of First Church. The brochure published during the 125th Anniversary of First Church, written by Dr. R. W. Blemker was also filled with much information.

Others contributing chapters to this book were Charles J. Blair, Sunday School Superintendent since 1951, and Mesdames H. E. Bruey and Samuel Loliger. We cannot forget to mention the fine contribution of resource materials made by the secretaries of the Consistory in recording such copious minutes of this body's meetings and actions. Another great source of documentary material were the columns of First Church's weekly paper, "The Helper," now in its fortieth year of publication.

The Committee, being of fallible mind, recognizes the probability of some omissions both as concerns names and incidents that would have proven to be interesting and informative reading. If there are these, they are omissions brought on by the limits of the scope of the work here attempted or by lack of information on the part of those who have written these pages. It will be a measure of wisdom and human grace on the part of the reader to know that though fellowmen may forget, the Eternal God does not. The record God keeps is correct, while this is a sincere attempt at historical accuracy.

We are indebted to our church office secretary, Mrs. Lucile Huckels, who prepared the manuscript for the printer. Mr. Paul Schneider served as Chairman of the History Committee. Miss Anna Enzmann, another member of the Committee did research work for those writing, as did also Herbert Deibel.

Then there are those members of First Church, both living and those who have reaped the rewards of their faithfulness, who by their loyal and devoted love for Christ and His Church, have really written in deeds the history it has been our pleasure and inspiration to record here.



## CONSISTORY — 1960

### ELDERS

Paul Boldt, Sr.  
Harold Bollinger  
George Casper  
Karl Fahrner  
Edward Offenburger  
Harry Schmuck  
William Walker, Jr.  
Carl O. Weis

### DEACONS

Ted Dunlap	Sam Ruefly
Donald Haas	Perry Shearer
Marvin Hohler	Verl Shearer
Don Long	Alexander Sollie
Dean Lorson	Norman Tschantz
Clarence Marburger	Darel Weaver
Ralph Maurer	Robert Young
Charles W. Offenburger	Richard Zahler

## THE CHURCH STAFF

Dr. Karl Koepke	Minister
Miss Mary Jo Taylor	Youth Director
Mrs. Lucile Huckels	Office Secretary
Carl E. Snyder	Financial Secretary
Mrs. Lawrence Henninger	Executive Financial Secretary
Mrs. Lawrence Henninger	Building Fund Treasurer
Mrs. Leslie D. Hanson	Chorister
Mrs. Neilson Pickering	Organist
George Casper	Custodian

## FIRST REFORMED CHURCH SCHOOL OFFICERS — 1960

### GENERAL

Superintendent	Charles Blair
Assistant Superintendent	Frank Boyd, Jr.
Assistant Superintendent	T. Gail Reigle
Assistant Superintendent	Lyone Adams
Secretary	Carl Spanagel
Assistant Secretary	Mrs. Spencer Streiber
Assistant Secretary	Mrs. Walter Vogelsang
Treasurer	Herman Fahrner
Assistant Treasurer	Elmer Currie
Assistant Treasurer	Carl Hoover
Secretary of Superintendent's Cabinet	Miss Janice Blyer
Assistant Secretary	Mrs. Carl Snyder
Enrollment Secretary	Mrs. Ronald Clarke
Assistant Secretary	Mrs. Ralph Maurer
Birthday Secretary	Miss Anna Enzmann
Assistant Secretary	Mrs. Joseph Yun
Librarian	Clarence Baab
Assistant Librarian	Philip Billings
Missionary Superintendent	Mrs. Charles Offenburger



Assistant Missionary Superintendent .....	Mrs. William Yingling
Flower Committee Chairman .....	Mrs. Clarence Baab
Assistant Flower Chairman .....	Mrs. Carl Aebi
Home Department Chairman .....	*Mrs. Floyd Perman
Assistant Home Department Chairman .....	Mrs. Clarence Miller
Children's Division Superintendent .....	Mrs. Carl Snyder
Junior Church Superintendent .....	Mrs. Wilbur Cooper
Athletic Director .....	Tom Zahler

#### DEPARTMENTAL

Adult Department Superintendent .....	Sam Ruefly
Assistant Superintendent .....	William Rank
Pianist .....	Mrs. Virgil Hinton
Assistant Pianist .....	Mrs. Austin Stock
Assistant Pianist .....	Mrs. Karl Koepke
Young People's and Senior Dept. Superintendent .....	Wilbur Billings
Assistant Superintendent .....	Tom Zahler
Junior and Intermediate Dept. Superintendent .....	Mrs. Lester Riegler
Assistant Superintendent .....	William Jordy
Pianist .....	Mrs. Matilda Marbot
Junior Department Superintendent .....	Mrs. Harold Frutschy
Intermediate Department Superintendent .....	Harold Weyand
Primary Department Superintendent .....	Mrs. Carl Snyder
Assistant Superintendent .....	Mrs. Roy Mark
Secretary .....	Miss Janice Blyer
Assistant Secretary .....	Miss Karen Boldt
Pianist .....	Miss Joan Drechsler
Assistant Pianist .....	Mrs. Paul Schneider
Kindergarten Department Superintendent .....	Mrs. Karl Fahrner
Assistant Superintendent .....	Mrs. Thomas Bennett
Secretary .....	Mrs. Verda Wild
Pianist .....	Miss Barbara Sollie
Assistant Pianist .....	Mrs. Lyone Adams
Nursery Department Superintendent .....	Mrs. Arnold Warkall
Assistant Superintendent .....	Mrs. James Sherman
Pianist .....	Mrs. Paul Ake
Cradleroll Class Superintendent .....	Mrs. Wilbur Garner
Assistant Superintendent .....	Mrs. Milton Leuthold
Secretary .....	Mrs. Norman Schemansky
Assistant Secretary .....	Mrs. Helen Wilt
Infants' Department Superintendent .....	Mrs. Harold Weyand
Assistant Superintendent .....	Mrs. Cyril Rispin
Assistant Superintendent .....	Mrs. Donald Morrison
Cradleroll Department Superintendent .....	Mrs. George Currie
Assisant Superintendent .....	Mrs. Daniel McDonald
Assistant Superintendent .....	Mrs. Clarence Baab

## **FIRST REFORMED CHURCH SCHOOL TEACHERS — 1960**

### **ADULT DEPARTMENT**

Dr. Karl Koepke	Mr. Charles Hill	Mr. Don Abbey
Mr. Charles Blair	Mr. Paul Schneider	Mr. Edward D. Okey
Mr. Harry Schmuck	Mr. William Thom	Mr. Bolton Strauch
Mr. Ralph Kressly	Mrs. Harry Bruey	Mr. William Walker, Jr.
Mr. James Seccombe	Mrs. William Rank	Mr. Russell Jordy
Mrs. Robert Castanien	Miss Emma Hill	Mr. Don Steenrod
Mr. Earl Hafer	Mrs. Samuel Loliger	Mr. Norman Wetzel

### **SENIOR DEPARTMENT**

Mr. Wilbur Billings	Mr. Tom Zahler	Mr. Earl Schibler**
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### **JUNIOR AND INTERMEDIATE DEPARTMENTS**

Mr. Robert Blyer	Miss Ruth Currie	
Mrs. Robert Blyer	Mrs. Matilda Marbot	Mr. Gene Hesslink
Mrs. Carl Spanagel	Mr. William Jordy	Mr. Ray Roshong
Mr. Robert Yeary	Mr. Harold Frutschy	Mrs. Floyd Perman*
Mr. Ed Hesslink	Mr. Dean Lorson	Mr. John Ulmschneider
	Mr. Verl Shearer	Mrs. William Noggle

### **PRIMARY DEPARTMENT**

Mrs. Paul Schneider	Mrs. Don Abbey	Mrs. William Parry
Mrs. Helen Shankel	Mrs. Sam Ruefly	Miss Margaret Zernechel
Mrs. Melvin Gross	Mrs. Robert Rebillot	Miss Joan Drechsler
	Mrs. George Casper	

### **KINDERGARTEN DEPARTMENT**

Mrs. Thomas Bennett	Mrs. Lyone Adams	Miss Barbara Sollie
Mrs. Joseph Scott	Mrs. Verda Wild	Mrs. Robert Yeary
	Miss Kathy Adams	

### **NURSERY DEPARTMENT**

Mrs. James Sherman	Mrs. Edward Ramsey
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### **CRADLEROLL CLASS**

Mrs. Milton Leuthold	Mrs. Norman Schemansky	Mrs. Helen Wilt
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### **INFANTS DEPARTMENT**

Mrs. Cyril Rispin	Miss Karen Weyand	Mrs. Donald Morrison
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\*Retired June 1960  
\*\*Retired July 1960

## CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS — 1960

### SENIOR CHOIR

Mrs. Goebel Yeary	President
Albert Guillod	Vice President
Mrs. Andrew Gabor	Secretary-Treasurer

### LADIES AID SOCIETY

Mrs. Chester Lyle	President
Mrs. Austin C. Stock	First Vice President
Mrs. Edward Offenburger	Second Vice President
Mrs. Praiter Blackburn	Secretary
Miss Anna Enzmann	Treasurer

### WOMEN'S GUILD

Mrs. George Wharmby	President
Mrs. Charles Offenburger	First Vice President
Mrs. Wilbur Billings	Second Vice President
Mrs. Joseph Atkinson	Secretary
Mrs. Edward Offenburger	Treasurer

### AFTERNOON CIRCLE

Mrs. E. Guy Hornbeck	President
Mrs. Walter Vogelsang	Vice President
Mrs. George Wharmby	Secretary
Mrs. Clarence Baab	Treasurer

### BUSINESS WOMEN'S CIRCLE

Mrs. Earl Hafer	President
Mrs. Alvin Wetzel	Vice President
Miss Katherine Evans	Secretary
Mrs. Samuel Bachtel	Treasurer

### EMMA ZIEMER CIRCLE

Mrs. Gust Schwitzgable	President
Mrs. Carl Hoover	Vice President
Mrs. Ralph Maurer	Secretary
Mrs. Spencer Streiber	Treasurer



#### FLORA C. HEIDRICH CIRCLE

Mrs. S. J. Ruefly .....	President
Mrs. Eugene Roderick, Jr. ....	Vice President
Mrs. Cyril Rispin .....	Secretary
Mrs. Harold Weyand .....	Treasurer

#### EVER-FAITHFUL CIRCLE

Mrs. Horace Reehl, Jr. ....	President
Mrs. Charles Vetrone .....	Vice President
Mrs. William Jordy .....	Secretary
Mrs. Nicholas Kakos .....	Treasurer

#### YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

Miss Mary Jo Taylor .....	Youth Director
Philip Billings .....	President
John Weyand .....	Vice President
Bonnie Guillod .....	Secretary
Diane Rodd .....	Treasurer
Barbara Garner .....	Chaplain



## **SESQUI-CENTENNIAL WORSHIP SERVICES**

***For Entire Month of October***

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 2nd ----- 8:00 and 10:00 A. M.**

Centennial Celebration of the Holy Communion  
Two Identical Services

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 9th ----- 10:00 A. M.**

Guest Speaker — Rev. R. W. Blemker, D.D.  
Former Pastor of First Church, now of St. Petersburg, Fla.

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16th ----- 10:00 A. M.**

Speaker — Rev. Karl Koepke, S.T.D.  
Pastor, First Church

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 23rd ----- 10:00 A. M.**

Guest Speaker — Rev. Willis Mathias, Ph. D.  
Pastor, Emmanuel E & R Church, Allentown, Pa.  
Interim Pastor, First Church Canton, during 1925

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 30th — ANNIVERSARY SUNDAY ----- 10:00 A. M.**

Guest Speaker — Rev. F. W. Schroeder, D.D.  
President, Eden Theological Seminary, Webster Groves, Mo.



## **". . . OUR FEET ON LOFTY PLACES"**

An Historical Pageant Depicting 150 Years' Growth

of

### **FIRST REFORMED CHURCH**

Written and Produced by Mrs. Robert Holsing, Chairman,  
Mrs. Charles Blair, and Mrs. Harry Schmuck

#### **SCENES FROM THE HISTORICAL PAGEANT**



**AN EARLY CHURCH SERVICE — 1810**



**THE GENERAL STORE — 1858**



LAYING THE CORNER STONE — 1861



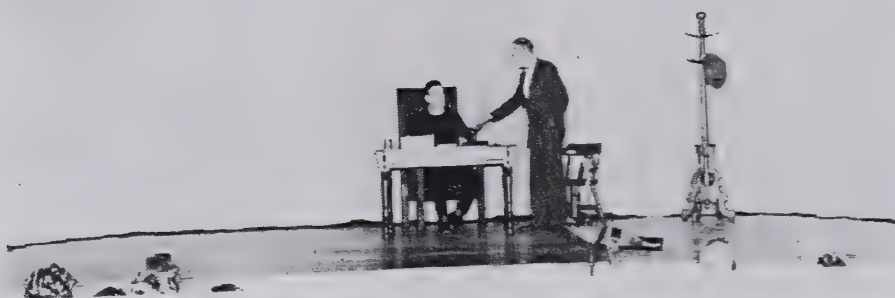
SOCIAL GATHERING — 1886



SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES — 1896



TEACHERS AND OFFICERS MEETING — 1897



REV. BOLLIGER'S STUDY — 1917



CONSISTORY MEETING — 1926



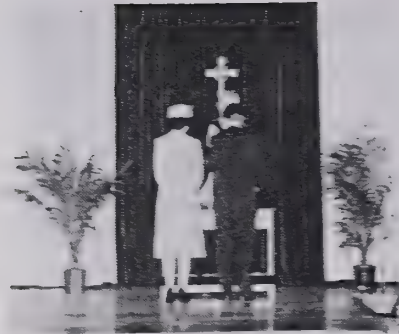


THE CALL TO A MINISTER — 1946

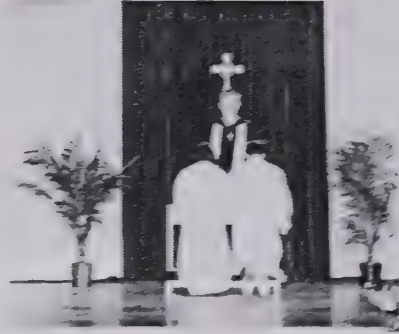


YOUTH FELLOWSHIP — 1960

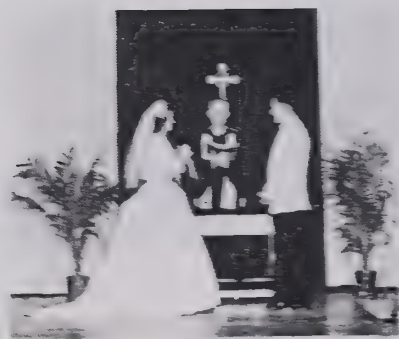
"THE LOFTY PLACES"



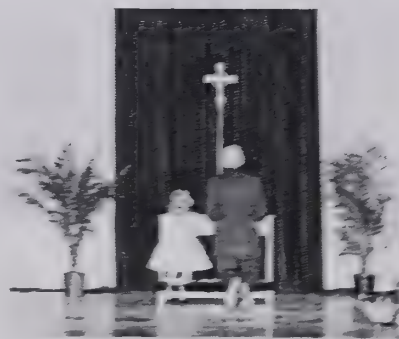
Baptism



Confirmation and Communion



Wedding



Faith and Prayer













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